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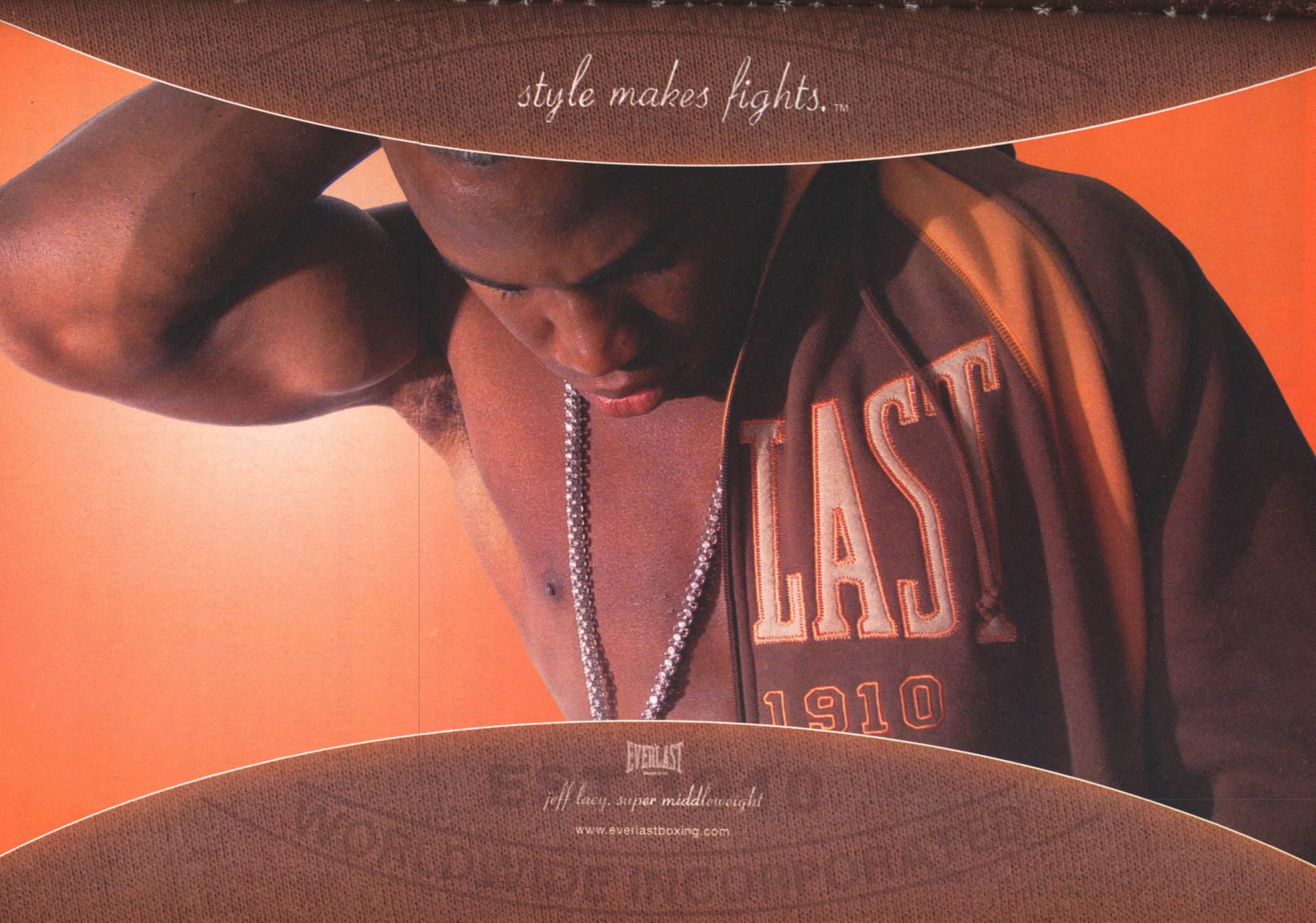

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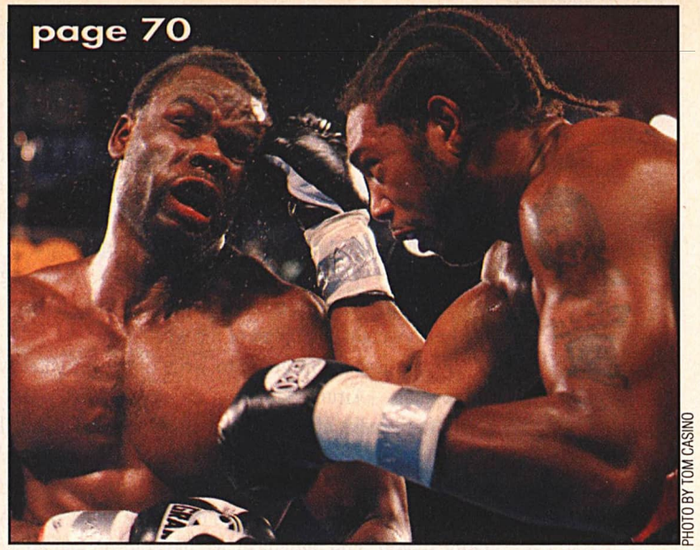

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

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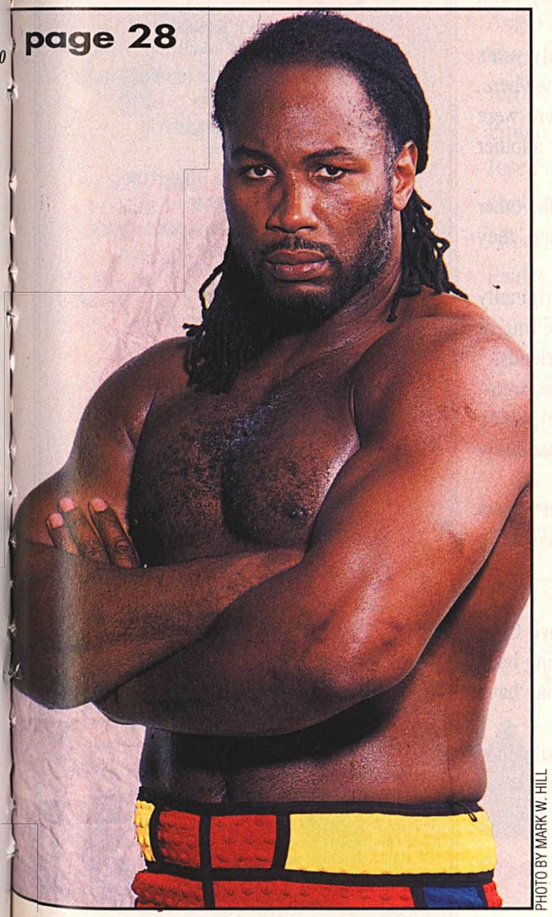

PHOTO BY MARK W. HILL

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RINGSIDE

Last month I filled this space telling everybody what a great guy Lennox Lewis is. Then he went and acted like a jerk in the immediate aftermath of his fight with Vitali Klitschko. Even though he won, Lennox sounded like a graduate of the Julio Cesar Chavez School For Poor Losers, refusing to give Klitschko his props or acknowledge how lucky he was to still be the heavyweight champion of the world.

So this issue, I'm going to write about a fighter who never disappoints—Arturo Gatti.

A few weeks after the final chapter of his epic trilogy with Micky Ward, I met Arturo at his manager Pat Lynch's office in Secaucus, New Jersey. The office is located above a Subway sandwich shop, a block or two down the street from Al Certo's tailor's shop. You remember Al, the colorful and volatile trainer of two-division former titleholder Buddy McGirt, who now trains Gatti—just another example of the strange symmetry that exists within the small world of boxing.

Freelance photographer Tom Casino came along to take some pictures, which was a bonus because Tom has known Arturo since the Canadian-born fighter first moved to North Jersey in the early-1990s to launch his pro career. He was a fresh-faced 19-year-old back then, and Tom, who had befriended Arturo's older brother Joe, didn't realize at first that Arturo was fighter.

"He looked like a little kid," recalled Casino. "I remember being at a restaurant with him and Joe years ago. We were talking boxing, when Arturo suddenly says, 'I'm a fighter too, Tommy.' I said, 'Sure, kid. Pass the ketchup.'"

Casino, whose pet name for Arturo is "Psycho," loves to recall those early years with Gatti and the pranks Arturo used to play when Tom was driving him somewhere, such as sticking a wet finger in his ear or covering his eyes at 60 mph. There were also times when Casino had to restrain Arturo from going after some guy or another who was giving them a hard time.

"Arturo would be yelling, 'Let me go, Tommy.' But I'd hold on and tell the other guy, 'I just saved your life, a__hole!' Arturo was so small and young looking, they didn't realize who they were dealing with."

Gatti is all grown up now, of course, but the same personality traits that originally endeared him to Casino are still evident. True, he's not as crazy outside of the ring as he used to be, but Arturo is still fun-loving, fearless, and fiercely loyal to his friends.

He breezed into Lynch's office, accompanied by his fiancée, Vivian Penha, wearing a cast on his right hand and a grin on his face. Arturo and Vivian were getting ready to move into a new house, and it was charming to hear him speak excitedly about the deer he'd seen in the backyard of their new home.

Tough guys aren't supposed to care about stuff like that, but hang around boxers long enough and you realize that despite what they do for a living, they're frequently sensitive souls. It just manifests itself in different ways.

Compare the way Gatti showed respect and admiration for Ward to Lewis' sophomoric behavior after the Klitschko fight, and you'll understand why fans love Gatti regardless of whether he wins or loses. Lewis showed Gatti-like courage battling back against Klitschko, and had he been gracious and forthcoming afterward, he may have won some new fans.

Gatti has lost three times as many fights as Lewis and hasn't worn a title belt since 1997. But he's more popular now than he's ever been, and a large part of that has to do with the sort of person he is. Lewis would do well to learn by his example.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 82, No. 11 November 2003

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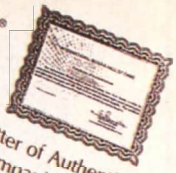

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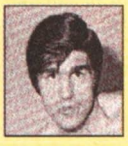

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ROUND ONE

ANOTHER MELEE FOR MIKE

The original plan, long before Kirk Johnson got injured and Vitali Klitschko stepped in, was for Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis to fight in separate bouts on June 21. And that's precisely what happened.

About 17 hours before Lewis narrowly escaped his entertaining world title defense against Klitschko, Tyson let his hands go in a brawl with three civilians in a Brooklyn hotel lobby. Instead of putting his gloves on and picking up a multimillion-dollar payday to probably blast out Oleg Maskaev, Tyson had handcuffs slapped on and picked up a third-degree assault charge for sending Nestor Alvarez-Ramos, Samuel Velez, and Thamara Ocasio to the hospital.

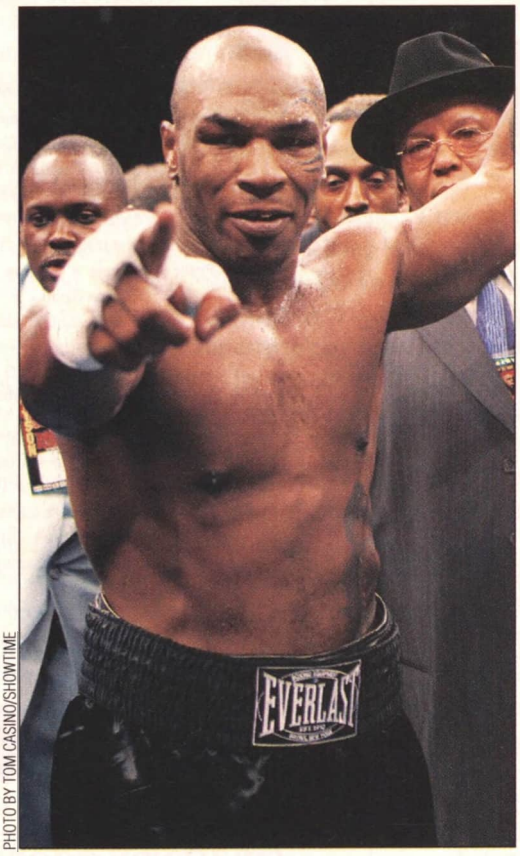


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Tyson's coming for you next!

When Klitschko went on later that evening to establish himself as a pay-per-view superfight opponent for Lewis, Tyson slipped farther into irrelevance in the heavyweight picture. The only headlines he's made since his February kayo of Cliff Etienne have had absolutely nothing to do with his boxing career; instead, he's drawn attention for stating in a nationally televised interview that he'd now like to rape the woman he still denies raping more than a decade ago, Desiree Washington, and for this latest violent episode.

Not surprisingly, there are two sides to this story. According to Tyson's three opponents, after they spotted Tyson outside the Marriott Hotel near the Brooklyn Bridge, Alvarez-Ramos, 24, approached Tyson for an autograph and was then the victim of an unprovoked attack.

The account that was corroborated by witnesses, however, alleges that the trio was drunk, kept badgering Tyson for an autograph, and began mocking him for his tattoo around his left eye. Velez, 31, then gestured toward his waistband, implying that he might have a gun, and as the threesome entered the hotel, Tyson followed them and attacked.

He knocked Velez out with a punch to the mouth, according to police. Alvarez-Ramos then tried to gain an advantage by grabbing a metal stanchion from the hotel lobby and swinging it at Tyson, but he missed and Tyson knocked it out of his hands. Ocasio, 27, Velez' wife, then jumped on Tyson, but he flung her off with ease. When Alvarez-Ramos jumped behind the hotel lobby's front desk, Tyson leapt over the desk and threw punches.

Tyson suffered cuts on both hands, but his foes came out much worse, especially Velez, who complained of blurred vision and needed stitches in his mouth. Alvarez-Ramos had a lump on his head, and Ocasio was treated for minor injuries from being whisked aside by the former champ. Velez and Alvarez-Ramos were both charged with harassing Tyson.

It's not expected that Tyson will do any jail time for the incident, but he may pay in civil court—Ocasio's brother was quoted as saying, "We just hit the lottery" after the fracas. Tyson, meanwhile, is getting closer to hitting the bottom. Klitschko's advancement dropped Iron Mike to number eight in THE RING's heavyweight ratings, and with no plans in place to fight in hotel-casinos rather than hotel lobbies, Tyson might be out of contention altogether before long.

—Eric Raskin

INDUCTION WEEKEND DRAWS RECORD CROWD

This year's annual induction ceremony at the International Boxing Hall of Fame was perhaps the most eclectic weekend in the museum's 14-year history. There was the usual gathering of boxing legends in Canastota, New York, but there was also a wedding ceremony, a showcase for non-fat grills (for sale in designer colors), and one of the most popular figures to attend was from the sport of basketball.

The weekend kicked off on Thursday, June 5, when Hall of Famer Aaron Pryor married fiancee Frankie Lynn Wagner on the museum grounds. As the groom made his way to a makeshift altar at the Hall of Fame's new Courtyard of Champions, many of his fans began chanting, "It's Hawk time!"

The marriage was officiated by Canastota mayor Todd Rouse, Christy Martin served as a bridesmaid, Aaron Pryor Jr. was the best man, and the ceremony was witnessed by Mike McCallum, Marvin Hagler, Ruben Olivares, Carmen Basilio, and about 200 fans. After the newlyweds recited their vows and Pryor kissed the bride, they turned to the audience and raised their hands aloft like victorious fighters.

Five of the six living inductees from the Class of 2003—McCallum, George Foreman, Curtis Cokes, Nicolino Locche, and screenwriter Budd Schulberg—were in Canastota. Longtime boxing journalist Jack Fiske was unable to attend due to poor health.

Inducted posthumously were promoter Dan Duva, manager Al Weill, booking agent Dewey Fragetta, heavyweight champ Jess Willard, featherweight champ Louis "Kid" Kaplan, heavyweight contender Tom Sharkey, middleweight champ Fred Apostoli, featherweight champ Battling Battalino, bare knuckle lightweight champ Caleb Baldwin, and bare knuckle heavyweight champ Joe Goss.

An estimated 35,000 fans, a record, were in Canastota for the weekend, and a good number were drawn by Foreman. The two-time heavyweight champion said it was nice to be recognized as a fighter again and not a pitchman. When he was enshrined on Sunday, Big George offered a dose of humor to the proceedings.

McCallum, Schulberg, Foreman, Locche, and Cokes show off their rings

PHOTOS BY PAT ORR

Pryor and his bride emerge victorious

"You've heard of the Rope-a-Dope," he said to the crowd, referring to his famous 1974 "Rumble In The Jungle" fight with Muhammad Ali. "Well, I'm the dope."

He also added, "It's wonderful. Finally, I'm not the Grillman. I'm a boxing Hall of Famer, and I love it."

If Foreman provided levity, it was Lou Duva who nearly reduced the crowd to tears when he spoke of his late son Dan.

"They say boxing is a tough and sometimes ugly sport, and that may be true," Duva said. "They say boxing is made up of characters, and that may also be true. But it's also true that sometime and somewhere in the sport of boxing that someone will rise up who will make us all proud, and how proud I am of my son, Danny."

The Duvas are the third father-son combination to be enshrined in Canastota. They follow bare knuckle middleweight Prof. Mike Donovan and his referee son, Arthur Donovan, as well as 19th-century boxers Dutch Sam and Young Dutch Sam.

In addition to the many Hall of Fame alumni who return each year, this year saw a handful of boxing stars visit for the first time. Among them were Mando Ramos, John H. Stracey, Frank Bruno, and IBF heavyweight titleholder Chris Byrd.

The parade of champions took place Sunday morning, and the grand marshal was Jim Boeheim, head coach of the nearby Syracuse University basketball team, which won the 2003 NCAA national title. Boeheim was cheered enthusiastically along the entire parade route.

"I've always been a big boxing fan and I'm honored and excited to be here," said Boeheim.

As were about 35,000 others.

—Robert Cassidy

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
6-6-03	Eliecer Castillo KO 9 Lawrence Clay-Bey	FOXSN	h	C+	A-	B-
Well, that's why we dig the heavyweights						
6-7-03	Dominick Guinn KO 7 Michael Grant	HBO	h	B-	B	B-
More proof that all the screaming in the world won't turn a basketball player into a real prize fighter						
6-7-03	Arturo Gatti W 10 Micky Ward	HBO	w	A-	A	A
Guys: Thank you						
6-10-03	Jeremy Williams W 10 Andre Purlett	ESPN2	h	C	B+	C
Note to all managers: If your kid is fighting in Texas and you draw Barry Yates as the ref, file your protest post haste						
6-13-03	Epifanio Mendoza KO 1 Ruben Williams	ESPN2	m	C	B+	C+
Must be all kinds of fun to be a big puncher, don't you think?						
6-13-03	Rydell Booker W 10 Arthur Williams	ESPN2	c	C	C+	C-
No truth to the rumor Booker sweats Bavarian cream						
6-17-03	Juan Valenzuela KO 6 Brian Adams	ESPN2	w	C+	B-	C+
Adams is now considering retiring; if he does fight on, he should at least consider fighting guys his own size						
6-20-03	Diego Corrales KO 3 Damian Fuller	ESPN2	l	B	C	B-
Like Corrales or don't, but enjoy watching one of the best pure punchers in the business						
6-21-03	**Lennox Lewis KO 6 Vitali Klitschko**	**HBO**	**World h**	**A+**	**A-**	**B+**
What controversy? When Joe Souza is up to his elbow in frontal lobe, it's okay to stop it						
6-24-03	Zahir Raheem KO 4 Ablorh Sowah	ESPN2	f	C+	C-	C+
When Raheem outmuscles you, it may be time to hit the weight room						
6-24-03	Joe Mesi KO 1 Robert Davis	ESPN2	h	C+	B	B-
Don't get excited; Michael Grant stopped Davis last August						
6-27-03	Julio Diaz KO 7 Miguel Huerta	Telef	l	B-	B-	B+
We're not saying Huerta's nose bled a lot, but we heard Chuck Wepner passed out at ringside						
6-27-03	Elvir Muriqi KO 4 James Crawford	ESPN2	lh	C	B	B-
If Muriqi had won with the first punch he threw, Teddy would have hollered at him for not jabbing first						
6-27-03	Mike Stewart KO 3 Terronn Millett	ESPN2	jw	C+	D	C+
Yes, Stewart can fight, but more than anything this was plain smart matchmaking						
6-28-03	**Eric Morel W 12 Isidro Garcia**	**PPV**	**WBA fl**	**A**	**C+**	**B**
What a shame that we never got to see Morel against Ricardo Lopez						
6-28-03	Dmitriy Salita KO 3 John Hoffman	PPV	w	C	D+	C
Okay, when can we see Salita against someone who can fight?						
6-28-03	Daniel Santos W 12 Fulgencio Zuniga	PPV	jm	B	C	D+
If Wilfredo Gomez and Carlos Ortiz were dead, they'd be spinning in their graves						
6-28-03	Miguel Cotto KO 2 Rocky Martinez	PPV	jw	B	C+	B-
If you still don't think Cotto is going to be special, you haven't been watching						
6-28-03	Joe Calzaghe KO 2 Byron Mitchell	Show	sm	A	B+	A-
Round two a strong candidate for Round of the Year						
6-29-03	Omar Bernal W 10 Dorin Spivey	FOXSN	l	C	C+	B
Upset! Bernal outfights Spivey in a good one						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World/Alphabet title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Telef—Telefutura; Telem—Telemundo; HBO L—HBO Latino

BARRERA SWITCHES TO THE GOLD STANDARD

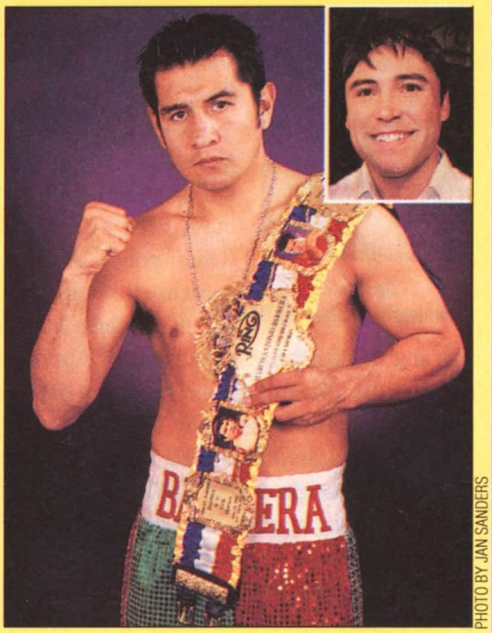


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

Barrera now has himself an Oscar (inset)

Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions made a huge leap forward by signing featherweight champion Marco Antonio Barrera in late-June. While De La Hoya already had a bevy of up-and-coming prospects under contract, none of them are world champions or pay-per-view fighters. Now, with Barrera in the fold on a fight-by-fight basis, De La Hoya is in position to stage major events.

"When Barrera came to me, we were just very happy, ecstatic," De La Hoya told Ed Castro of *The Desert Sun*. "Not only are we forming a team, we are going to work together like a family. We will treat Marco Antonio Barrera with the utmost respect and treat him fairly."

The announcement came a week after Barrera severed ties with longtime manager Ricardo Maldonado and promoter John Jackson.

"The main reason is a lack of honesty in the relationship," Barrera said of his decision to leave Maldonado and Jackson. "I feel I have found that honesty with the Golden Boy. People came out of the woodwork with a lot of quantities of money. But it is not quantity I was looking for; it was quality. I feel I have found that with Oscar."

Barrera filed a lawsuit against Maldonado and Jackson in early-June, seeking to free himself from the existing contract.

"There are a range of different issues with that agreement, which, in our opinion, are unenforceable," said De La Hoya's lawyer Steve Espinoza. Jackson doesn't see it that way. He said he intends to try to block Barrera from fighting for Golden Boy Promotions.

"It's in court now," Jackson told the *Los Angeles Times*. "Everything is in the hands of my lawyers."

While obtaining Barrera's services would be a major coup for Golden Boy Promotions, the best news as far as fans are concerned is what Barrera said about a rubber match with arch-rival Erik Morales.

"Of course I am interested in fighting Morales again," said Barrera. "We put on a great show in the first two fights, and I am certain a third bout would be no less exciting."

LUNA PARK MAKES SUCCESSFUL COMEBACK

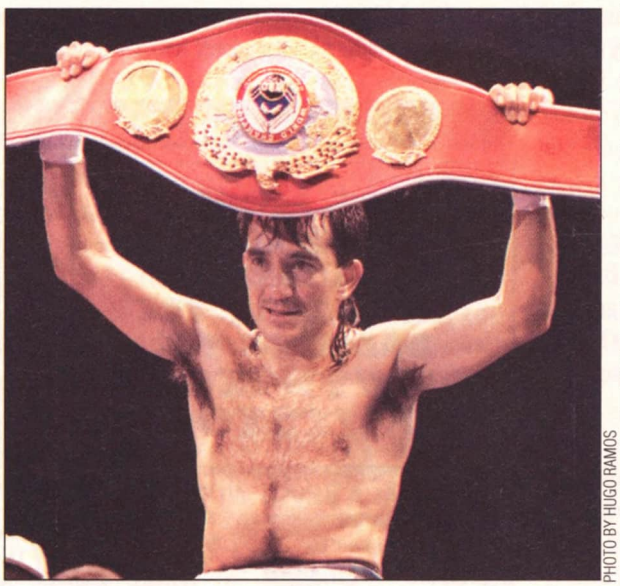


PHOTO BY HUGO RAMOS

Flyweight Narvaez drew 25,000 fans for two fights at Luna Park

In 1987, legendary promoter Tito Lectoure closed Luna Park (Argentina's version of Madison Square Garden) for boxing. The game was at an all-time low in the South American country, and Lectoure told THE RING that he was tired of the lack of cooperation he was getting from the Argentine boxing community.

"I feel very alone," said Lectoure, promising that he'd never again promote boxing at Luna Park.

Before Lectoure died in March '02, his nephew, Esteban Livera, tried to persuade his uncle to allow him to stage a card to celebrate Luna Park's 70th anniversary.

"Tito didn't say no, so I kept working on the idea," said Livera.

Finally, on July 13, 2002, Luna Park reopened for boxing with 14,000 fans in attendance to watch Omar Narvaez win the WBO flyweight title by decisioning Nicaragua's Adonis Rivas.

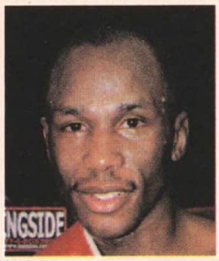
It wasn't exactly like the old days when Carlos Monzon, Oscar Bonavena, and Nicolino Locche were packing them in. Back then there were no fireworks, smoke effects, and lasers, but the fans did find a new favorite in Narvaez, who represented Argentina in the '02 Olympics.

The success of Luna Park's first boxing show in 15 years led to others. Local middleweight Javier Velazco drew 9,500 fans for his May '03 TKO of Andras Galfi, and in June, 11,000 customers turned out to watch Narvaez stop Everardo Morales. These numbers are even more impressive when you consider the fact that the fights were broadcast live on television.

Yes, boxing is back in Luna Park, and will stay there as long as the crowds keep coming. The only downer was that Lectoure, who was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2000, wasn't there to see it.

—Carlos Irusta

OUTSIDE THE ROPES



Austin: Facing rape charges

Former bantamweight titlist **Tim Austin**, just a few months removed from the first loss of his career, is spiraling downward quickly, as he now faces accusations that he raped a 16-year-old girl in mid-May. According to an affadavit filed by Springfield Township (Ohio) police, Austin engaged in nonconsensual sexual intercourse with the girl twice, three hours apart, while she was at a slumber party at the home of Austin's fiancee. The girl reported the alleged rape the very next day, but Austin wasn't arrested until DNA tests were completed nearly a month later. Austin was released on $5,000 bond … The news is better for former heavyweight champ **Riddick Bowe**, who was cleared of assault charges in early-June after his wife, **Terri**, whom he allegedly assaulted in March, and three other witnesses all failed to appear in court. Bowe, however, is already serving 18 months in a Maryland prison for kidnapping his previous wife and their children five years ago … Two New Jersey officials are in potential hot water after allegedly acquiring free passes to boxing matches for family and friends. The state ethics commission is investigating both Athletic Control Board Chairman **Gerald Gormley** and Attorney General **Peter Harvey**, alleging that they may have broken ethical standards by getting passes for people who weren't attending the fights in any official capacity … June was a kind month to New York-based promoter **Joe DeGuardia**, who won two big-money lawsuits less than a week apart. First, an arbitrator ordered light heavyweight **Antonio Tarver** to pay DeGuardia $250,000 for breaching a promotional contract, then rival promoter **Frank Locascio** was ordered to pay him $500,000 over a dispute involving light heavy **Elvir Muriqi** … Meanwhile, super middleweight **Antwun Echols** successfully got out of his promotional agreement with **Art Pelullo** in mid-June, as a U.S. District Court in Los Angeles declared the contract void and unenforceable, making Echols a free agent …Two-division former titlist **Antonio Cermeno** was arrested and charged with fraud in early-June in his native Venezuela. It was alleged that Cermeno, along with two other suspects, swindled $21,000 from a Caracas store owner in a currency exchange … As fiery as he is on the job, junior feather titlist **Manny Pacquiao** is apparently just as fiery in his night life. "Pac-Man" allegedly trashed a Philippines night club in mid-June, throwing beer bottles against the wall, knocking over a table, and kicking down several motorcycles outside the bar, after a woman there reportedly refused his advances … Undefeated 27-year-old featherweight **Daniel Seda** surprisingly announced his retirement in mid-June after a layoff of nearly a year. Seda, 18-0-1 (15), said he was "disillusioned and frustrated" that he couldn't seem to line up a fight following his weak performance in a two-round technical draw against **Derrick Gainer** in Seda's native Puerto Rico in August '02 … Irish trainer **Joe Montague** was shot dead in his car as he parked it in front of his Coventry, England, home in early-June, a shocking murder for which there seemed to be no leads. Montague, 64, trained former British and Commonwealth light heavyweight champ **Neil Simpson**, among others … Ending on a positive note: The **Lennox Lewis-Vitali Klitschko** fight on June 21 drew a 13.4 rating, HBO's best for heavyweights since the **George Foreman-Shannon Briggs** fight pulled in a 14.9 in 1997. The 13.4 rating translates into 4.6 million homes.

Cermeno: Facing fraud charges

THE PUNCHLINES

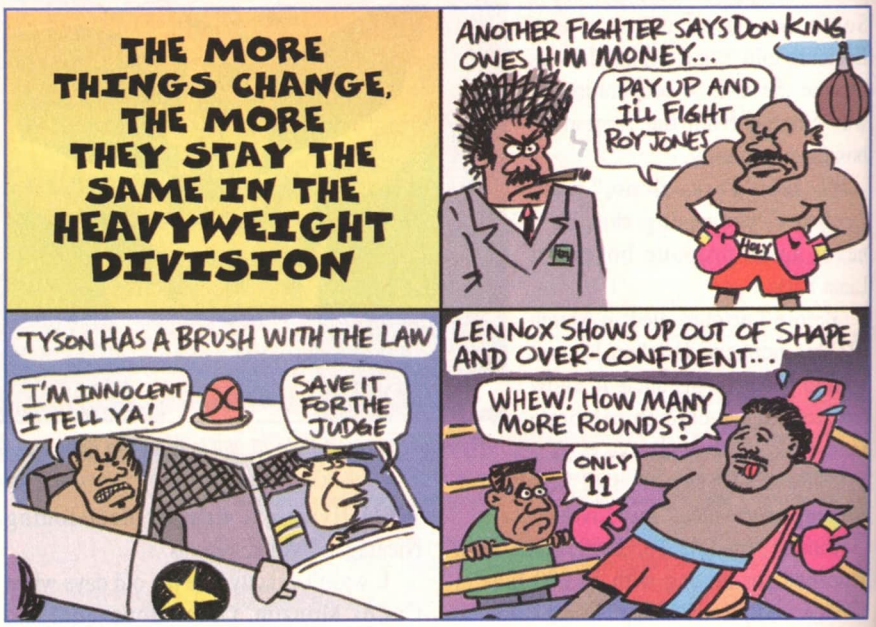
"President Bush needs to pass legislation that Gatti and Ward should fight every year until they can't walk anymore. Would anyone be against this?"

—Bill Simmons, ESPN.com columnist

"If you are going to pee on someone's rug, you don't give them advance notice and let them roll it up."

—Showtime's Jay Larkin, on why everyone was kept in the dark until the last minute about the Evander Holyfield-James Toney fight, which is scheduled for a date HBO Pay-Per-View was hoping to use

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended July 2, 2003)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **ROY JONES**
   Heavyweight/Light Heavyweight
2. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Middleweight
3. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Featherweight
4. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Junior Middleweight
5. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Junior Welterweight
6. **ERIK MORALES**
   Featherweight
7. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Lightweight
8. **RICARDO MAYORGA**
   Welterweight
9. **VERNON FORREST**
   Welterweight
10. **SHANE MOSLEY**
    Junior Middleweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Vitali Klitschko's strong bid to take the heavyweight title away from Lennox Lewis fell a bit short, but was good enough to rocket Vitali from 10th to fourth, sending everyone below down one spot.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Joe Calzaghe (second last issue) is back in the number-one spot following his second-round TKO of Byron Mitchell. Sven Ottke (first last issue), who had previously been taken the distance by Mitchell, drops to second place. Mitchell, who had Calzaghe down before succumbing, stays at number six.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Julio Garcia (10th last issue) is gone because he's now campaigning as a junior middle. Replacing him in the 10th spot is Evans Oure Ashira.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Streaking Julio Garcia, down from middleweight, replaces Alex Bunema at number 10.

WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Micky Ward (sixth last issue) has retired. His departure pushes everybody rated below him last issue up one rung each and makes room for Miguel Cotto at number 10. Also, on the strength of his rubber match win over Ward, Arturo Gatti climbs from third to second, switching places with Zab Judah.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: Paul Spadafora has relinquished the IBF lightweight belt in order to campaign as a 140-pounder. He will be appropriately ranked among the junior welters after he fights in that division. Spaddy's departure pushes everybody below him up one spot except for Juan Gomez Trinidad, who exits after being stopped by Javier Jauregui, who is aboard in the ninth position. Also new is Aldo Rios, who holds down 10th place.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Diego Corrales is back in the ratings at number five. Phillip Ndou advances from sixth to fourth following a strong win over Yoni Vargas, while Steve Forbes (fourth last issue) and Yodsanan Nanthachai (fifth last issue) fall to sixth and seventh, respectively. Everybody else ranked last issue goes down one spot each, which pushes Edelmiro Martinez out completely.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Frankie Toledo (seventh last issue) is gone because he has not fought in more than a year. This pushes up everybody rated below him last issue one spot and allows Rocky Juarez to come aboard at number 10.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

STRAWWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Lennox Lewis' (ninth last issue) poor performance against Vitali Klitschko knocks him out of the P-4-P ratings, which allows Vernon Forrest (10th last issue) to advance to ninth and Shane Mosley to return at the 10th spot. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended July 2, 2003

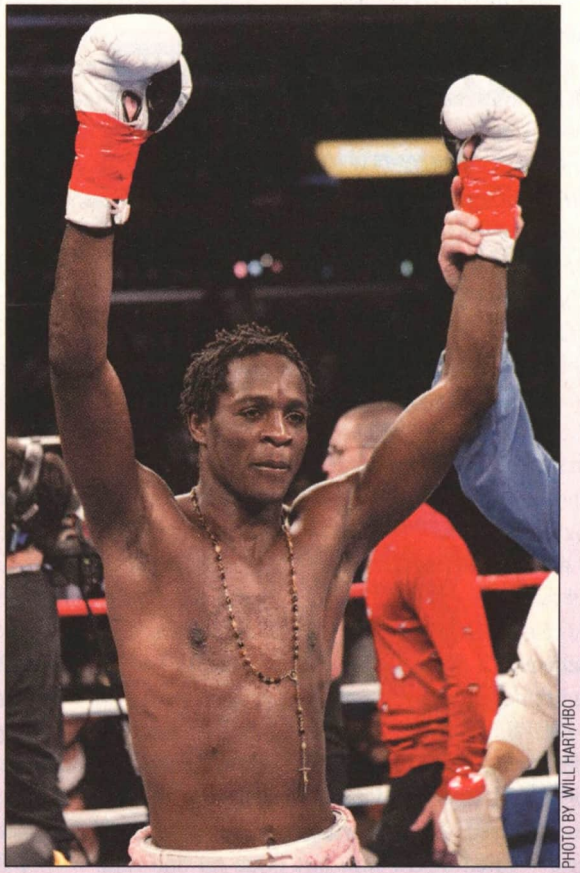


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Phillip Ndou advanced two spots at junior lightweight this month

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

Fighters recognized as champions by THE RING are rated at the top of their division, with the top 10 contenders listed below.

Championship vacancies can be filled in one of two ways: by unifying all three alphabet titles in a division; or by winning a box-off between THE RING'S number-one and number-two contenders, or, in certain instances, a box-off between our number-one and number-three contenders.

The only three occasions when a fighter will lose his championship status are when he retires, moves to another weight division, or is defeated in a championship bout.

Ratings By The Editors
Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

Champ: LENNOX LEWIS
England 41-2-1 (32)

1. **CHRIS BYRD**
Flint, MI 36-2 (20)
2. **CORRIE SANDERS**
South Africa 39-2 (29)
3. **ROY JONES**
Pensacola, FL 48-1 (38)
4. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 32-2 (31)
5. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
Atlanta, GA 38-6-2 (25)
6. **DAVID TUA**
New Zealand 42-3-1 (37)
7. **HASIM RAHMAN**
Baltimore, MD 35-4-1 (29)
8. **MIKE TYSON**
Catskill, NY 50-4 (44)
9. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 40-2 (37)
10. **JOHN RUIZ**
Chelsea, MA 38-5-1 (27)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: OSCAR DE LA HOYA
Los Angeles, CA 36-2 (29)

1. **WINKY WRIGHT**
St. Petersburg, FL 45-3 (25)
2. **FERNANDO VARGAS**
Oxnard, CA 22-2 (20)
3. **JAVIER CASTILLEJO**
Spain 55-5 (37)
4. **DANIEL SANTOS**
Puerto Rico 27-2-1 (20)
5. **SHANE MOSLEY**
Pomona, CA 38-2 (35)
6. **KASSIM OUMA**
W. Palm Beach, FL 17-1-1 (11)
7. **VERNO PHILLIPS**
Aurora, CO 35-9-1 (18)
8. **ALEX GARCIA**
Mexico 21-0 (20)
9. **BRONCO McKART**
Monroe, MI 45-5 (29)
10. **JULIO GARCIA**
Miami, FL 25-1-2 (11)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA
Mexico 57-3 (40)

1. **ERIK MORALES**
Mexico 44-1 (33)
2. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 40-2 (32)
3. **DERRICK GAINER**
Pensacola, FL 39-5-1 (24)
4. **SCOTT HARRISON**
Scotland 19-1-1 (9)
5. **MANUEL MEDINA**
Mexico 60-13 (27)
6. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
Albuquerque, NM 52-3-2 (28)
7. **LEHLO LEDWABA**
South Africa 34-2-1 (22)
8. **WILLIAM ABELYAN**
Glendale, CA 23-4-1 (12)
9. **MICHAEL BRODIE**
England 34-1 (22)
10. **ROCKY JUAREZ**
Houston, TX 16-0 (12)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: PAULIE AYALA
Ft. Worth, TX 34-2 (12)

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines 36-2-1 (27)
2. **OSCAR LARIOS**
Mexico 48-3-1 (33)
3. **SALIM MEDJKOUNE**
France 41-3-1 (21)
4. **JOSE LUIS VALBUENA**
Venezuela 22-2-1 (12)
5. **ISRAEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico 34-3 (25)
6. **WILLIE JORRIN**
Sacramento, CA 29-1-1 (13)
7. **JOAN GUZMAN**
Dominican Republic 18-0 (14)
8. **OSAMU SATO**
Japan 26-2-2 (15)
9. **YODDAMRONG SITHYODTHONG**
Thailand 34-1-1 (18)
10. **NEDAL HUSSEIN**
Australia 30-1 (17)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **RAFAEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 29-3 (27)
2. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM**
Thailand 41-1-1 (29)
3. **TIM AUSTIN**
Cincinnati, OH 25-1-1 (22)
4. **JOHNNY BREDAHL**
Denmark 53-2 (26)
5. **CRUZ CARBAJAL**
Mexico 23-11-1 (19)
6. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
Japan 23-3-2 (14)
7. **PETE FRISSINA**
Tarpon Springs, FL 26-3-1 (15)
8. **SILENCE MABUZA**
South Africa 14-0 (13)
9. **GENARO GARCIA**
Mexico 28-4 (16)
10. **HERIBERTO RUIZ**
Mexico 27-2-2 (13)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JAMES TONEY**
   Ann Arbor, MI 66-4-2 (42)
2. **VASSILIY JIROV**
   Kazakhstan 31-1 (27)
3. **JEAN-MARC MORMECK**
   France 29-2 (21)
4. **WAYNE BRAITHWAITE**
   Guyana 19-0 (16)
5. **JOHNNY NELSON**
   England 42-12-2 (28)
6. **GUILLERMO JONES**
   Panama 29-2-2 (22)
7. **O'NEIL BELL**
   Atlanta, GA 21-1-1 (20)
8. **EZRA SELLERS**
   Washington, D.C. 26-5 (24)
9. **VIRGIL HILL**
   Bismarck, ND 48-4 (23)
10. **SEBASTIAN ROTHMAN**
    South Africa 16-1-2 (12)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: ROY JONES
Pensacola, FL 48-1 (38)

1. **ANTONIO TARVER**
   Orlando, FL 21-1 (17)
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI**
   Germany 48-0 (38)
3. **GLENCOFFE JOHNSON**
   Miami, FL 39-9-1 (27)
4. **ERIC HARDING**
   Philadelphia, PA 21-3-1 (7)
5. **MEHDI SAHNOUNE**
   France 24-0 (21)
6. **JULIO GONZALEZ**
   Huntington Beach, CA 34-1 (22)
7. **MONTELL GRIFFIN**
   Chicago, IL 44-4 (29)
8. **BRUNO GIRARD**
   France 42-3-2 (7)
9. **LOU DEL VALLE**
   Bronx, NY 31-3-1 (21)
10. **GEORGE JONES**
    Paterson, NJ 19-2 (13)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOE CALZAGHE**
   Wales 36-0 (29)
2. **SVEN OTTKE**
   Germany 31-0 (6)
3. **ANTWUN ECHOLS**
   Davenport, IA 29-4-1 (26)
4. **MARKUS BEYER**
   Germany 27-1 (11)
5. **ERIC LUCAS**
   Canada 36-5-3 (13)
6. **BYRON MITCHELL**
   Ozark, AL 25-3-1 (18)
7. **CHARLES BREWER**
   Philadelphia, PA 39-9 (27)
8. **MADS LARSEN**
   Denmark 44-1 (37)
9. **ANTHONY MUNDINE**
   Australia 18-1 (14)
10. **SYD VANDERPOOL**
    Canada 33-2 (22)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: BERNARD HOPKINS
Philadelphia, PA 42-2-1 (31)

1. **WILLIAM JOPPY**
   Washington, D.C. 34-2-1 (25)
2. **HOWARD EASTMAN**
   England 37-1 (34)
3. **ROBERT ALLEN**
   Atlanta, GA 35-4 (26)
4. **TITO MENDOZA**
   Panama 28-4 (21)
5. **SERGEY TATEVOSYAN**
   Russia 18-3 (13)
6. **HASSINE CHERIFI**
   France 34-6-1 (20)
7. **RODNEY JONES**
   Lafayette, LA 29-3 (18)
8. **JERMAIN TAYLOR**
   Little Rock, AK 16-0 (12)
9. **CARL DANIELS**
   St. Louis, MO 48-4-1 (30)
10. **EVANS OURE ASHIRA**
    Denmark 22-0 (12)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: RICARDO MAYORGA
Nicaragua 24-3-1 (22)

1. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA 35-1 (26)
2. **ANTONIO MARGARITO**
   Mexico 28-3 (19)
3. **CORY SPINKS**
   St. Louis, MO 31-2 (11)
4. **THOMAS DAMGAARD**
   Denmark 32-0 (25)
5. **MICHELE PICCIRILLO**
   Italy 38-2 (24)
6. **MANUEL GOMEZ**
   Mexico 22-10 (17)
7. **ANDREW LEWIS**
   Guyana 22-2-1 (20)
8. **ELIO ORTIZ**
   Venezuela 25-4 (19)
9. **JAWAID KHALIQ**
   England 21-1-1 (13)
10. **HECTOR QUIROZ**
    Mexico 37-7-1 (30)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: KOSTYA TSZYU
Australia 30-1 (24)

1. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
   Washington, D.C. 52-3 (30)
2. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ 36-6 (28)
3. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY 28-1 (21)
4. **DeMARCUS CORLEY**
   Washington, D.C. 28-1-1 (16)
5. **VIVIAN HARRIS**
   Brooklyn, NY 22-1-1 (16)
6. **OKTAY URKAL**
   Germany 33-1 (10)
7. **DIOBELYS HURTADO**
   Miami, FL 35-3-1 (23)
8. **RICKY HATTON**
   England 32-0 (24)
9. **OMAR WEIS**
   Los Angeles, CA 36-4-3 (16)
10. **MIGUEL COTTO**
    Puerto Rico 16-0 (13)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: FLOYD MAYWEATHER
Grand Rapids, MI 30-0 (20)

1. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO**
   Mexico 47-6-1 (43)
2. **LEONARD DORIN**
   Canada 21-0-1 (7)
3. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO 35-2-1 (17)
4. **JUAN LAZCANO**
   El Paso, TX 32-2-1 (24)
5. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN 42-6-1 (31)
6. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN**
   Uzbekistan 36-0 (22)
7. **ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ**
   Mexico 49-5-1 (33)
8. **JULIEN LORCY**
   France 55-3-2 (40)
9. **JAVIER JAUREGUI**
   Mexico 46-10-2 (33)
10. **ALDO RIOS**
    Argentina 33-2 (5)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ACELINO FREITAS**
   Brazil 33-0 (30)
2. **JOEL CASAMAYOR**
   Miami, FL 29-1 (18)
3. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Mexico 39-2 (28)
4. **PHILLIP NDOU**
   South Africa 31-1 (30)
5. **DIEGO CORRALES**
   Sacramento, CA 37-1 (31)
6. **STEVE FORBES**
   Las Vegas, NV 23-1 (6)
7. **YODSANAN NANTHACHAI**
   Thailand 39-2-1 (32)
8. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSAK**
   Thailand 40-1 (23)
9. **CARLOS HERNANDEZ**
   Bellflower, CA 39-3-1 (24)
10. **CASSIUS BALOYI**
    South Africa 28-1 (16)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA**
   North Korea 29-2-1 (8)
2. **ALEXANDER MUNOZ**
   Venezuela 23-0 (23)
3. **FERNANDO MONTIEL**
   Mexico 26-0-1 (20)
4. **LUIS PEREZ**
   Nicaragua 21-1 (14)
5. **MARTIN CASTILLO**
   Mexico 23-1 (14)
6. **FELIX MACHADO**
   Venezuela 22-4-1 (11)
7. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia 30-3-1 (20)
8. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia 38-0 (28)
9. **OSCAR ANDRADE**
   Mexico 29-22-1 (16)
10. **KATSUSHIGE KAWASHIMA**
    Japan 23-3 (16)

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ERIC MOREL**
   Madison, WI 33-0 (18)
2. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM**
   Thailand 47-2 (25)
3. **IRENE PACHECO**
   Colombia 27-0 (20)
4. **MZUKISI SIKALI**
   South Africa 27-4-2 (16)
5. **HAWK MAKEPULA**
   South Africa 20-2 (13)
6. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
   Philippines 14-1-2 (10)
7. **PETER CULSHAW**
   England 23-1-1 (12)
8. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
   Argentina 14-0-1 (8)
9. **DAMAEN KELLY**
   Ireland 18-1 (8)
10. **LORENZO PARRA**
    Venezuela 20-0 (16)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: ROSENDO ALVAREZ
Nicaragua 32-2-1 (21)

1. **JORGE ARCE**
   Mexico 34-3-1 (25)
2. **BEBIS MENDOZA**
   Colombia 28-2 (23)
3. **PICHIT SRIWAT**
   Thailand 27-2 (12)
4. **NELSON DIEPPA**
   Puerto Rico 19-2-2 (11)
5. **YOSAM CHOI**
   South Korea 24-2 (13)
6. **MELCHOR COB-CASTRO**
   Mexico 66-9-4 (30)
7. **JOSE VICTOR BURGOS**
   Mexico 36-13-2 (21)
8. **MHIKIZA MYEKENI**
   South Africa 17-1 (6)
9. **FAHLAN SAKKREERIN**
   Thailand 50-3-2 (20)
10. **KERMIN GUARDIA**
    Colombia 34-2 (21)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOSE AGUIRRE**
   Mexico 30-1-1 (19)
2. **NOEL ARAMBULET**
   Venezuela 19-2-1 (10)
3. **EDGAR CARDENAS**
   Mexico 30-10-2 (16)
4. **CHANA PORPAOIN**
   Thailand 49-2-2 (17)
5. **KEITARO HOSHINO**
   Japan 23-10 (6)
6. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines 32-7-2 (22)
7. **ROBERTO LEYVA**
   Mexico 21-2-1 (18)
8. **DANIEL REYES**
   Colombia 29-1-1 (24)
9. **JUAN PALACIOS**
   Nicaragua 13-2 (9)
10. **ISAAC BUSTOS**
    Mexico 19-6-3 (9)

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

HOPING ... BUT FOR WHAT?

The best throwback item for sale to sports fans today isn't a replica of George Mikan's old Minneapolis Lakers jersey, a pair of those clam-digger pants once favored by the Chicago White Sox, or a Detroit Red Wings hockey sweater that really is a *sweater.* Dollar for dollar, the best "classic" you can get your hands on is a ticket to an Arturo Gatti fight. Watch "Thunder" bust ass and bust open, and you understand how they used to do it in places like the St. Nicholas Arena at a time when title bouts were 15 rounds, fighters fought for the love of the game, and the action was brought to you in living black-and-white by Pabst Blue Ribbon beer.

Who among us hasn't sat around at one time or another, talking about an athlete from a particular period in history, and speculating as to how he would have fared in another era? Haven't you wondered aloud if Tiger Woods could have beaten Jack Nicklaus? Guessed how Joe Namath's career would have turned out if he played in the age of MRIs and arthroscopic surgery? Tried to calculate what the pay-per-view buy rate would have been for Louis-Schmeling II?

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Ward and Gatti do their thing a third and final time

It's a fun exercise—that is, unless you're tossing around Gatti's name. Because once you start imagining him marching off to battle in some other decade, you start to feel sorry for the kid. Why, you ask yourself, couldn't he have been born earlier? Doesn't he, as much as any fighter in recent memory, deserve to have competed at a time when boxing enjoyed greater popularity and was a more important part of American society?

Let's not even go all the way back to the days of the *Gillette Cavalcade Of Sports.* Instead, let's picture Gatti landing shots and forming clots in the early-'80s. At the time, boxing was thriving

on the commercial networks, the NFL strike of '82 opened up even more weekend dates, and matinee idols were being churned out faster than Pat Benatar albums. Campaigning at between 130 and 147 pounds, Gatti could have spent many a Saturday afternoon swinging from the floor against, or being deposited on it by, the likes of Bazooka Limon, Bobby Chacon, Cornelius Boza-Edwards, Sean O'Grady, Edwin Rosario, Hector Camacho, Bruce Curry, Ray Mancini, and others.

Had Gatti fought in the '80s, heck, he would have *been* Mancini, but a much better version. Thunder would have actually faced risky foes, not just talked about it, and struggled less with the bums than "Boom Boom" did. CBS, NBC, and ABC would have clamored for him. Marv Albert would have shouted himself hoarse during Gatti's fights and Howard Cosell would have called him "a pugilist of unrelenting gallantry."

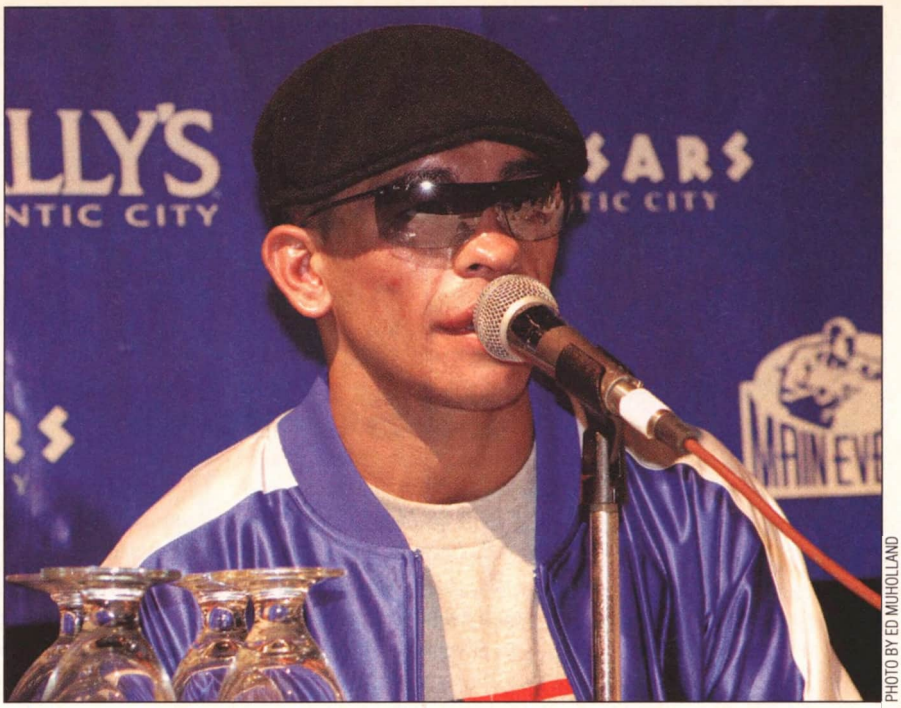


PHOTO BY ED MUHOLLAND

A battered Gatti says he still has a lot to give

The best thing about Gatti fighting way back then, however, is that he would be retired in 2003. Yes, at the risk of sounding like the guy who turned on the sprinklers and pulled the fire alarm to bust up the rave party, allow me to point out how nice it would be if Gatti was working as an ESPN analyst, training fighters, or standing toe-to-toe in the business world every day. The face that launched a thousand groupies is sporting more scars with every passing year, the brain keeps getting jolted in a way it wasn't designed to, and one has to worry about how Gatti will be walking, speaking, and thinking a decade or two hence.

Forget the wins over Micky Ward, the excitement quotient, the ratings Gatti gets on HBO, and the cash he generates for the industry. Gatti doesn't belong on the inside of the ropes anymore, plain and simple. The three wars he just had with Ward are the kind of brutal bloodlettings that permanently rob something from an athlete. Ward knew as much, which is why he announced that Armageddon III would be his last outing, win or lose. Even in victory, Gatti paid a hefty fee. He hit the floor, injured his right hand, got cut over the left eye, and had his face bruised and puffed up.

So this is going to be the start of a "Let's Get Gatti To Quit" campaign, right? Uh, not exactly. As passionately as Gatti can make one feel about the risks he continues to take, that's just how strongly he can make the case that he has earned the right to stick around at least a little bit longer. Because he's done everything a promoter, manager, trainer, fan, writer, and sport could ever ask of him. At the age of 31 (which, for a lighter-weight fighter, is getting up there), and with more wear and tear on him than a '67 Corvair that regularly travels the Cross Bronx Expressway, Gatti is still good enough to be rated among the top three junior welters. And in the September 2003 issue of THE RING, in a feature that assigned letter grades to boxing's elite, Gatti received an "A" in the category of Growth Potential because "superfights and possible title shots are out there."

That's for sure. That long talked-about showdown with Kostya Tszyu has Fight of the Year potential, and still would even if Zale-Graziano IV and Pryor-Arguello III were scheduled around it. Gatti vs. Floyd Mayweather or Ricky Hatton would be a lot of fun, too, and if Paul Spadafora stood flatfooted against Gatti as he did in his lightweight shootout with Leonard Dorin, that's also a matchup worth making.

"I'm going to be a world champion again and these fights are going to be part of my history," Gatti said after the rubber match with Ward. "But I have a lot more to offer."

Gatti, who once owned the IBF junior lightweight crown for more than two years, *deserves* another crack at a world championship. He *deserves* to have the largest purse of his career still to come. He *deserves* a pay-per-view date. But what happens when Gatti gets that shot? Let's say, for argument's sake, it comes against Tszyu. There are three likely scenarios to envision, and all are bad. One, Gatti suffers a terrible beating or brutal knockout, just the thing his body doesn't need. Two, he drops a close fight and inevitably continues his career after convincing himself that he still has something left. Or three, Gatti beats Tszyu and gains the championship. Would he walk away on top? What do you think? That's right, he'd keep fighting, and absorbing punishment, until he was dethroned.

It's a real dilemma. And it makes it tough for those of us who respect and feel gratitude toward Gatti to root for him. At the same time, how can you not?

Count me among those who really, *really* don't want to watch him throw punches anymore—but, of course, will.

This is, after all, Arturo Gatti we're talking about. And where there's Thunder, there's lightning. ■

DIGGING DEEP

By Ivan Goldman

TYSON: WHY WE CARE

The Mike Tyson saga rolls on. It bristles with sex, money, violence, betrayal, and celebrity power. It all adds up to media dynamite.

Once again Tyson agreed to a fight (this time with fall-down victim Oleg Maskaev) and once again he went AWOL at a crucial juncture, killing the deal. And once more, at some point during his adventure, Tyson, we are told, slapped around his former promoter Don King.

For a week, the story goes, Tyson was locked in a New York hotel room with a woman who allegedly was out to prevent the fight with Maskaev for complex reasons I shall not even try to untangle. Chief Tyson handler Shelly Finkel, unable to get Tyson to emerge, called in some other expert persuader to assist. Nothing doing.

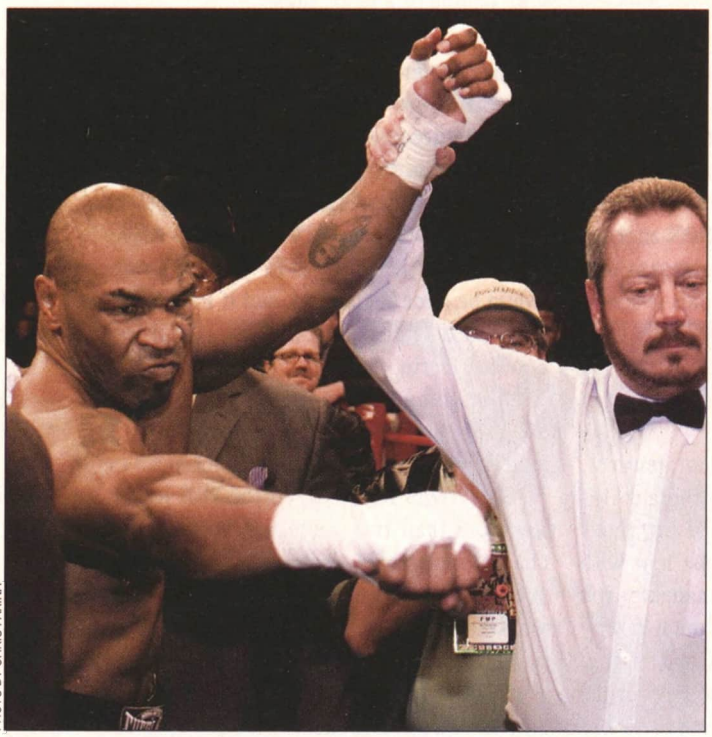


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Right back at you, Mike

In a pair of lawsuits against Tyson and King, Lennox Lewis alleges King was the puppeteer pulling the strings for this entire series of bizarre events, except maybe the part where he gets slapped around. (The mere fact that Lewis is filing a suit because he feels that Tyson and King's actions are preventing a rematch with Tyson—a fight Lewis claims to have no interest in—is bizarre in itself!)

Just when it seemed things were settling down, Tyson went on TV and said no, he didn't rape Desiree Washington in 1991, but now that he thinks about it, he ought to. And her mom, too.

That's when we had to listen to legions of outraged media oafs telling us that something ought to be done about this man. Who are they trying to kid? If Tyson didn't say stuff like that, he'd be fighting on ESPN2 for $8,000 purses and no one would ask to interview him.

CHUMPS: The Boxing Writers Association of America, a largely East Coast bunch of scribes, claims it's finally made a deal to retrieve funds embezzled by its former president, Chris Thorne. Last year, Thorne admitted stealing at least $31,000 from the treasury. But the details of this restitution, if it actually takes place, were not spelled out.

Some of these BWAA people are pretty decent folks. But I see others at press conferences who routinely ask fighters obnoxious questions. Then when one of their own rips them off, they're afraid to hurt his feelings. What schlamozzles.

And there's more. In the nearly 10 years I've worked for this magazine, the ink-stained wretches at the BWAA never once presented one of their annual awards to our editors or writers. But we're putting out a consistently superior product that they read religiously.

I guess to get some recognition we have to do it *New York Times*-style. My next column will reveal

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

They should erect a statue to Gatti and Ward

Tyson's extraterrestrial roots. Plus, did you know that Marco Antonio Barrera is actually *Norwegian*? He's never even eaten an enchilada. The CIA hid the facts. Stay tuned.

MARK THE SPOT: At some prominent spot in Atlantic City, where they finished their historic trilogy, there ought to be a statue of Arturo Gatti and Micky Ward. So in generations to come, when children ask who these two men were, it can be explained that, no, they weren't politicians or generals. They didn't lead armies into battle. They *were* battle.

GET YOUR OWN KRYPTONITE: I received a message a while ago from someone named Shawn Darling, who said she was writing on behalf of former light heavyweight champ Matthew Saad Muhammad. She wanted to know if I would be interested in writing a book about his "unbelievable life."

Poor Shawn hasn't figured out that *everybody* in boxing has led an unbelievable life. Still, I was flattered to be included in her mass mailing that went out to about a billion writers. You never can tell where these things will lead.

Some years ago I wrote a book called *L.A. Secret Police* about the adventures of Los Angeles detective Mike Rothmiller. Afterward, I was swamped with offers from legions of people from different walks of life eager for me to write their stories. Some samples: A stockbroker who sued his company over some obscure financial dispute and lost. An ex-DEA agent who as far as I could tell spent his entire career going to meetings. He kept all the notes, too. Another cop who was fired from three police departments because, he explained, everyone was out to get him. A woman who, when she was a little girl, lived next door to Lucille Ball. She didn't remember much else, but figured I could fill in the rest.

The fact is, people in boxing *do* tend to be more interesting. That's why it has plenty of fans and people who want to write about it. Probably 10 or 15 times a year somebody asks me how they can get my job. What are these people thinking? Does Macy's tell Gimbel's? Does Superman tell people how to get their hands on some Kryptonite?

DO I SMELL SOMETHING?: Is it just me or did ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights* put on what may be the longest string of stinkers in TV history? Show after show the commentators got all dressed up with no place to go.

Every Friday night the viewers ordered steak, and the waiter showed up with baloney on white. Did somebody out there cast an evil spell over the matchmaker? Come to think of it, I seem to recall seeing Fox's Rich Marotta sticking pins into a doll collection. I should have been more suspicious. But when you catch a big guy like Marotta playing with dolls, you just shut up and keep moving.

Those poor ESPN2 analysts were reliving the Myth of Sisyphus. Each week they rolled the boulder up the mountain and each week it slid back down to the bottom. Then after all those cruel weeks of snoozers, they finally broke the jinx with the cruiserweight match between O'Neil Bell and Kelvin Davis.

Though not a great fight, it was a damn good one. It offered back-and-forth drama, sustained action, and sincere violence. When Bell went back to the corner after round two with a long, deep cut from a headbutt, his cutman inspired him with this little speech: "Aw, s___. This is a nasty f___ing cut."

Dude! The corner is supposed to keep the fighter calm. That's why you don't make Chicken Little a submarine skipper. Anyway, it all turned out okay. The cornerman collected himself and told Bell a nice thing to do would be to knock Davis out, which he eventually did.

Speaking of ESPN2, here's a salute to the rock-solid Bob Papa, who said farewell to the network and sadly, to *Friday Night Fights*. Papa's replacement, Joe Tessitore, was hired off a local station in Hartford, Connecticut. According to Dan Rafael of *USA Today*, incoming Tessitore told him, "I hope to maintain how great the product has been."

Not an auspicious beginning, Joe. When Papa held the job, his sentences made grammatical sense. Maybe they can put the show on tape delay and dub in an English speaker for Tessitore. Just kidding, Joe. Welcome to the pitiless world of national boxing journalism.

GOOD IDEA: TV analyst and ex-heavyweight Scott LeDoux, during the Armed Forces championship bouts on ESPN2, lamented, as many of us do, that some amateur judges just don't give points for bodypunches.

"I've always wanted to give one of *them* a body-shot," he said, "then ask him, 'What do you think? Is that okay?'"

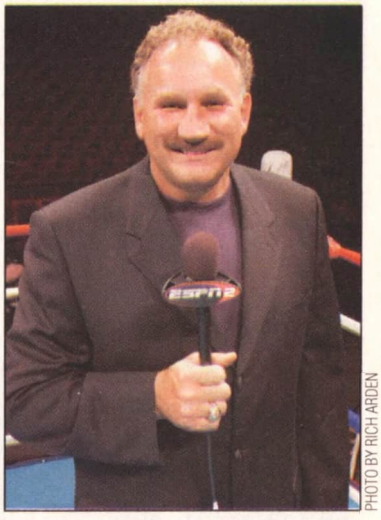


PHOTO BY RICH ARDEN

ESPN's LeDoux loves to go to the body

MAGOO: Those New Mexico judges who unanimously robbed Mexico's Trinidad Mendoza against Danny Romero ought to be locked up. But I was inspired by the fans who had the good sense to boo the 12-round hometown decision. ■

RING 8 MEETING

IF YOU GO

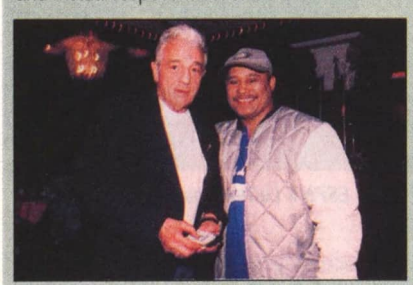
Location: 2-03 Borden Ave., Long Island City, NY 11101. Phone: 718-729-4862. Meetings are the third Tuesday of every month. Meetings are subject to change, so always call first.

Directions: From Manhattan, take the Midtown Tunnel east. Once out of the tunnel, get into the right lane. Pay toll and make immediate right. Take Borden Ave. until the end. Restaurant is on right at the intersection of Borden and 2nd St. From points east, take the Long Island Expressway (495) west to Van Dam Street (exit 15, and last exit before the tunnel). Follow service road under the expressway and turn right onto Borden Ave. Take to the end, and restaurant is on right.

Membership: $25 annually. Membership is open to anyone, but only fighters are eligible for benefits, such as optical coverage, dental expenses, annual physical, and a death benefit for surviving family members.

Who to look out for: Hall of Famer Emile Griffith, former WBC featherweight titleholder Juan LaPorte, and '50s welterweight contender Joe Miceli, who fought 12 world champions, attend meetings on a regular basis.

Advice to greenhorns: Debates can get heated. At one meeting, Max Kellerman downplayed the controversy of the Cassius Clay-Doug Jones decision and argued that Clay won easily. Little did he know Jones' manager was a Ring 8 member. And while arguments are made with passion, just like after every good fight, the meetings end with handshakes and mutual respect. Most of the time.



1960s welter Lenny Mangiapane and former WBC featherweight titlist Juan LaPorte

Crab House owner Tony Mazzarella and memorabilia

Text by Robert Cassidy
Photos by Chris Cassidy

There was a time when New York City was considered the Mecca of boxing. While all the fabled fight joints—Stillman's Gym, St. Nicholas Arena, Sunnyside Gardens—have disappeared, many of the fighters who plied their craft inside those venues are still around.

And yes, they still have a home.

It's the Waterfront Crab House in Long Island City, Queens, which is where Ring 8, the New York City chapter of the Veteran Boxers Association, holds its monthly meetings.

"It's nice to get together and see familiar faces, to sit down and talk about the good old days," said Bobby Bartels, a former main event welterweight and now the president of Ring 8. "We laugh, we kid each other. I can walk in and say to a guy, 'What are you, punchy?' and we get a good laugh. But only a fighter can say that to another fighter. Nobody else."

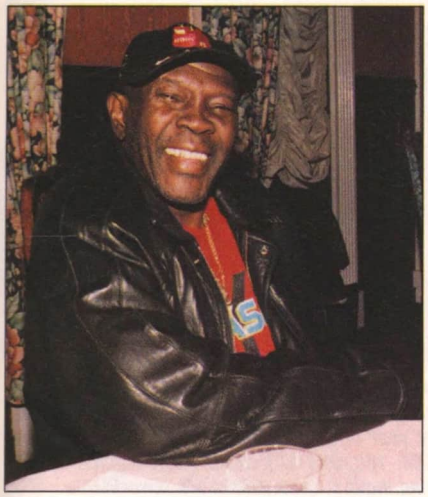
Indeed, boxing is a unique fraternity, and the monthly meetings provide the fighters with an evening during which they return to the spotlight. While the camaraderie is heartwarming, the organization's purpose extends far beyond that of a social club.

"Our goal is to help the indigent fighter," said Bartels. "We help out whenever we can. The motto here is 'Boxers Helping Boxers.'"

The organization is celebrating its 50th anniversary, and its legacy of good deeds goes back decades. But for all its noble

The official home of Ring 8

Ring 8 president Bobby Bartels conducts a meeting



Hall of Famer Emile Griffith is a regular

The meeting is underway

Coley Wallace, who beat Rocky Marciano in the amateurs and played Joe Louis in the movie

endeavors, the club was fading until Tony Mazzarella, who owns the Crab House, offered to host meetings in 1993. Since then, Ring 8 has thrived. It has approximately 500 dues-paying members, and one third of the membership are fighters.

In addition to the membership benefits *(see sidebar)*, the organization also helps with expenses such as rent, utilities, and groceries on a per-need basis.

The meetings begin, informally, at the restaurant's bar where Mazzarella has assembled one of the finest collections of boxing memorabilia south of Canastota. The crowd mingles until the official start of the meetings, which are held upstairs in a dining room. Mazzarella and his staff provide a hot buffet.

"It's very gratifying to be involved," said Mazzarella, a former member of the New York State Athletic Commission and now a promoter. "A guy will walk into a meeting, rush across the room to another guy and say, 'I fought you 40 years ago in Sunnyside. You hit me with a helluva hook in the second round.' The next thing you know, they are slapping each other on the back. To me, that is a special bond that you don't see too often."

A visit to a meeting offers a true slice of the Big Apple. There are guest speakers each month, and at any given meeting, one could find themselves seated amongst a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist, a former member of the New York Knicks, a U.S. Congressman, a movie director, or even a full-fledged wiseguy.

The main attraction, though, is the fighters. They have great stories to tell and it doesn't take much to get them rolling. All the fighters are approachable and will often sign autographs and pose for pictures. ■

CAMERA CLICKS

International Boxing Hall of Fame Induction Weekend

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

The unofficial "headliner" at this year's Induction Weekend, George Foreman, takes a moment to sign autographs for some of his many fans. The two-time heavyweight champ was a big hit at the Hall, helping to draw what was said to be the biggest crowd in IBHOF history.

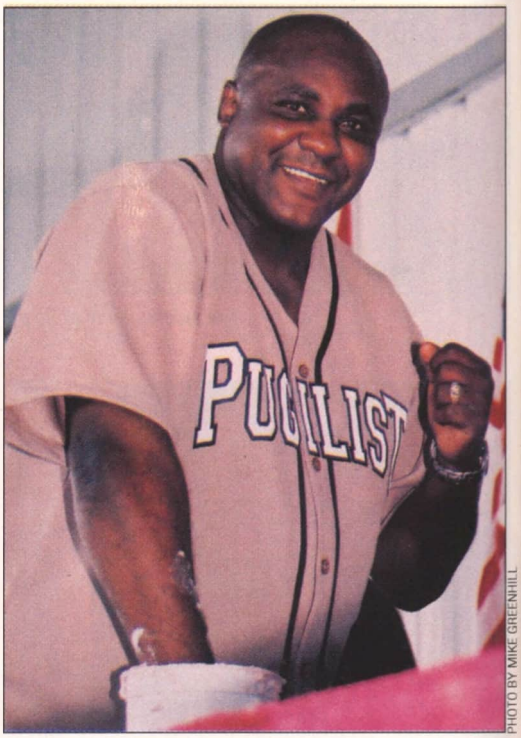


PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Mike McCallum, seen here making a fist cast for the Hall, joined a select group by getting inducted this June in his first year of eligibility. "The Body Snatcher" won titles at 154, 160, and 175 pounds, and has the distinction of being the first Jamaican to win a world title.

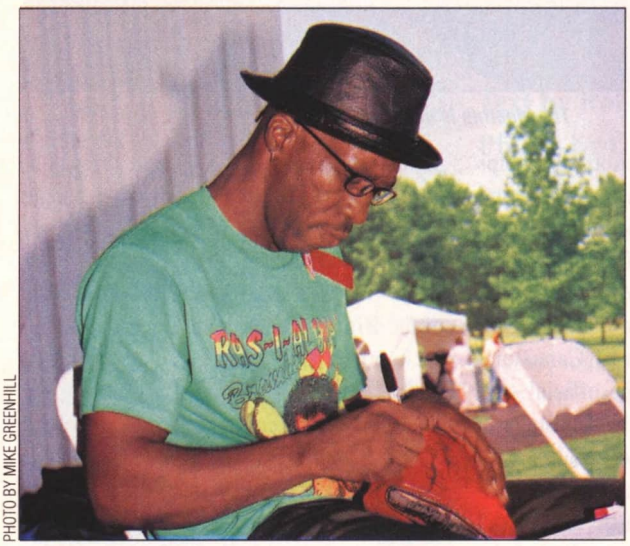


PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Former lightweight titleholder Livingstone Bramble wasn't one of this year's inductees, but he was on hand in Canastota anyway, signing autographs and sporting a T-shirt with his likeness on it. Regardless of whether or not he's Hall-worthy, Bramble isn't even eligible for induction yet because, at age 42, he's still fighting. In fact, three weeks after June's Induction Weekend, Bramble fought in Salt Lake City, losing a six-round decision to Armando Robles.

PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Have a Cokes and a smile: Curtis Cokes was beaming with pride in Canastota, having been inducted more than 30 years after the end of his excellent career. Cokes, now a world-class trainer, held the world welterweight title for 2½ years in the late-'60s.

PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

No, Al Green didn't make it to Canastota this year. That's former heavyweight beltholder Jimmy Ellis singing some gospel at the Hall. The song was an emotional number entitled "If Ingemar Johansson's In Here, Why Not Me?"

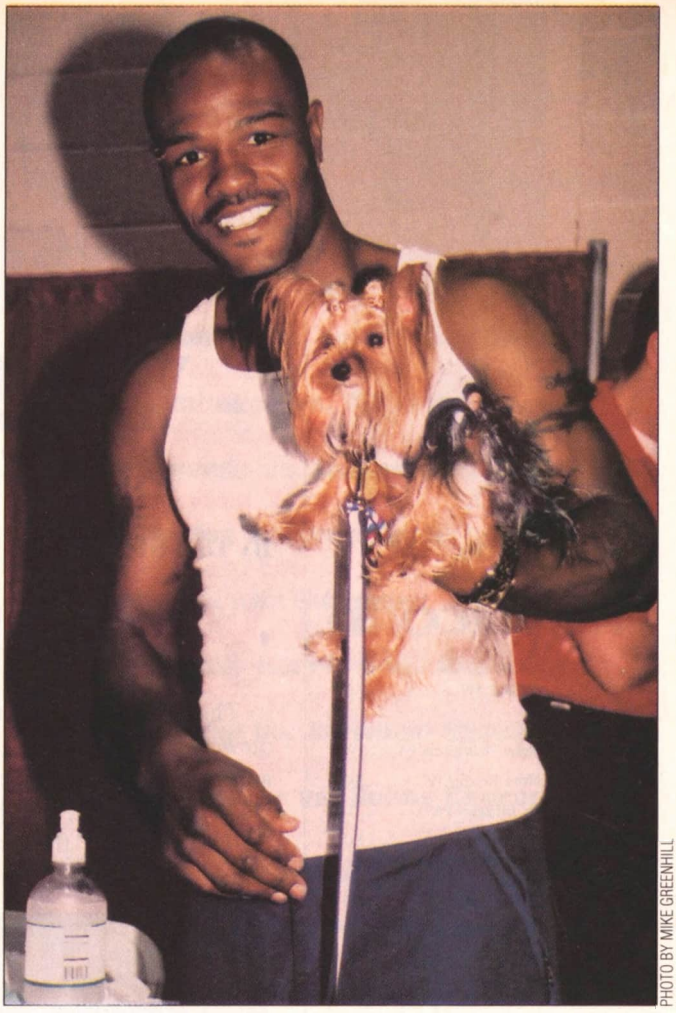


PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

No, that's not Luis Santana; that's another dog that three-time junior middleweight titlist Terry Norris is posing with. Norris still has a couple of years to wait before he's eligible for induction, but he's certainly not hurting his cause by showing up in Canastota to rub elbows nearly every year.

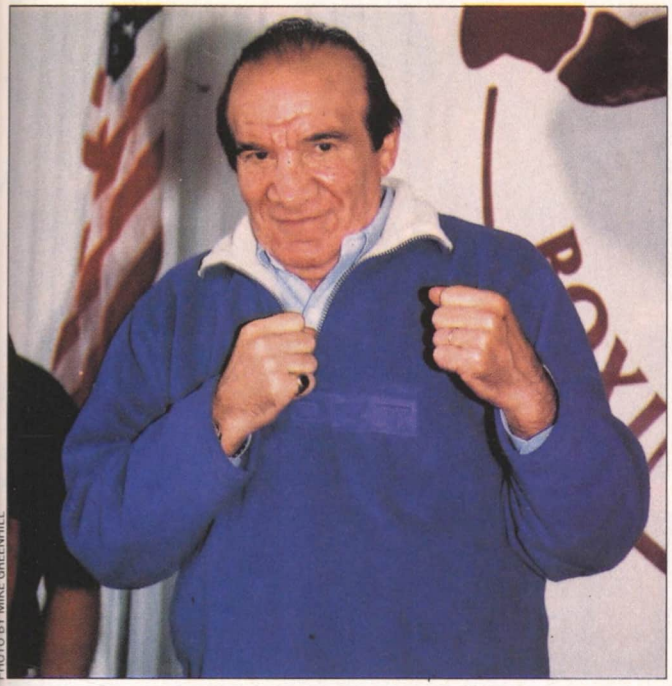
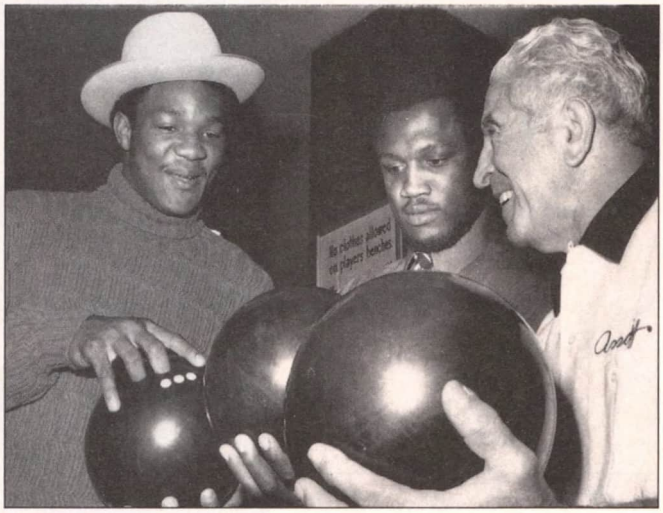


PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Former junior welterweight champion Nicolino Locche made the trip from Argentina for his Hall induction, but shook off the jet lag to strike this boxing pose. Locche, a light-hitting defensive whiz, was 140-pound king for more than three years, from December '68 to March '72.

NOSTALGIA CORNER



Just five months into his pro career, future Hall of Famer Foreman, along with future rival and fellow Hall of Famer Joe Frazier, tried another sport, taking pointers from former bowling champ Andy Varipapa. Foreman later found that knocking down Frazier in Jamaica was nearly as easy as knocking down pins at the bowling alley.

NEW FACES

YUSAF MACK

Super Middleweight

By Don Stewart

Yusaf Mack doesn't have to look far for inspiration—it's tattooed all over his body.

The Philadelphia-bred super middleweight prospect can glance at his forearms and see the inscribed names of those closest to his heart, literally and figuratively. There's "Cuz," the nickname of Mack's father, Terry Smith. There's "Shamyia," his four-year-old daughter, along with a tat for one of his four sons.

Yes, the 23-year-old Mack has five kids to take care of, thus making him officially a Mack Daddy.

On his left forearm, the words "Rest In Peace Steve" are there as a tribute to brother Steven Mack, who was gunned down on a North Philly street corner in a robbery attempt eight years ago.

(Continued on page 88)

PRO RECORD

2000		
Nov. 17	Willie Lee, Biloxi, MS	KO 2
2001		
March 29	Benji Singleton, Philadelphia, PA	W 6
Sept. 25	Todd Richwine, Reading, PA	KO 1
Oct. 10	Jose Aponte, Essington, PA	D 4
Nov. 3	Gary Grant, Philadelphia	KO 6
2002		
March 26	Morgan Wilson, Philadelphia	KO 1
July 7	John McKinney, Biloxi	KO 4
Dec. 6	Alex Dill, Philadelphia	W 6
2003		
Feb. 21	Robert Marsh, Philadelphia	W 6
March 3	Matthew Thompson, Philadelphia	W 6
April 4	Robert Marsh, Philadelphia	KO 1
June 27	Juan Carlos Viloria, Philadelphia	KO 4

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
12	11	0	1	7

PHOTO BY CHRIS CALLOWAY

DREAM ABOUT THESE FIGHTS...

Jack Dempsey vs. Joe Louis
Muhammad Ali vs. Mike Tyson
Rocky Marciano vs. Joe Frazier
Sonny Liston vs. Evander Holyfield
Jack Johnson vs. Gene Tunney
Larry Holmes vs. Jersey Joe Walcott
George Foreman vs. Lennox Lewis
Sam Langford vs. Jimmy Bivins
Roy Jones vs. Ezzard Charles
Archie Moore vs. Michael Spinks
Billy Conn vs. Bob Foster
Dwight Muhammad Qawi vs. Victor Galindez
Matthew Saad Muhammad vs. Jose Torres
Marvin Hagler vs. Harry Greb
Stanley Ketchel vs. Rocky Graziano
Dick Tiger vs. Tony Zale
Mickey Walker vs. Jake LaMotta
Bernard Hopkins vs. Carlos Monzon
James Toney vs. Gene Fullmer
Nino Benvenuti vs. Marcel Cerdan
Ray Robinson vs. Ray Leonard
Carmen Basilio vs. Thomas Hearns
Kid Gavilan vs. Felix Trinidad
Jose Napoles vs. Fritzie Zivic
Barney Ross vs. Pipino Cuevas

Emile Griffith vs. Jimmy McLarnin
Simon Brown vs. Lloyd Honeyghan
Aaron Pryor vs. Meldrick Taylor
Tony Canzoneri vs. Julio Cesar Chavez
Wilfred Benitez vs. Kostya Tszyu
Pernell Whitaker vs. Roberto Duran
Benny Leonard vs. Henry Armstrong
Alexis Arguello vs. Carlos Ortiz
Ike Williams vs. Floyd Mayweather
Shane Mosley vs. Beau Jack
Joe Brown vs. Lou Ambers
Joe Gans vs. Ken Buchanan
Kid Chocolate vs. Flash Elorde
Marco Antonio Barrera vs. Willie Pep
Ruben Olivares vs. Azumah Nelson
Sandy Saddler vs. Salvador Sanchez
Eder Jofre vs. Naseem Hamed
Vincente Saldivar vs. Bobby Chacon
Wilfredo Gomez vs. Jeff Fenech
Panama Al Brown vs. Fighting Harada
Carlos Zarate vs. Jeff Chandler
Manuel Ortiz vs. Terry McGovern
Benny Lynch vs. Pancho Villa
Jimmy Wilde vs. Ricardo Lopez
Miguel Canto vs. Pascual Perez

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LENNOX LEWIS' DILEMMA

"He Should Not Fight On, But He Has To"

By Brian Doogan

PHOTOS BY WILL HART/HBO

Both Lewis and Klitschko landed heavy blows in their entertaining championship bout, but the fact that Klitschko landed more of them than Lewis did suggests that the time may be right for the champion to retire. It's nearly certain, however, that Lewis will fight at least once more.

Noble exits from the noble art are just not the way of fighting men, particularly the men who have ruled boxing's most exalted dominion.

Gene Tunney and Rocky Marciano retired as world heavyweight champions, but every other great king has relinquished the scepter reluctantly. There are the haunting images of a balding Joe Louis being bludgeoned out of the ring by Marciano and of an exhausted Muhammad Ali bowing his head in his corner at the end of 10 rounds of being beaten to every punch by Larry Holmes. There is the refusal today by 40-year-old Evander Holyfield to accept the wearing reality of aging, and there is the spiral of self-destruction entrapping Mike Tyson. Soon, too, there may be another woeful tale if what took place on June 21 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles was any indication.

Lennox Lewis, 41-2-1 (32), is in danger of being lost in the language of delusion that is the mother tongue of the fighter in decline. It is a language spoken by fading fighters and the people around them. It is easy on the ear and it soothes the ego. But delusions are dangerous. Emanuel Steward, Lewis' trainer, listened to its wayward words 22 years ago in the final training camp of an ailing Ali and tried to be a dissenting voice, a voice of reason. Nobody heard him, not even when his young welterweight, Tommy Hearns, landed a right hand on the great man in sparring that might have provided Steward, if one were needed, with an exclamation point.

There were signs in Los Angeles, as standout as the big one on the Hollywood hills, that Lewis, too, is feeling the tiredness of a lifetime in the ring. In one revealing admission on the day after his debilitating defense of his title against Vitali Klitschko, 32-2 (31), when a terrible cut above the 6'8" Ukrainian's left eye offered both men an escape from their own personal purgatory, Lewis said: "I am definitely starting to feel the aging process." But he had barely drawn breath, sat on a sofa in the Beverly Hills Hotel with Steward at his side, before he added: "Another intriguing possibility has now opened up for my career. There is the matter of my legacy to be thought about." Steward listened to his fighter and described the night before as "the worst fight of Lennox's career." He will be better against Klitschko next time, Steward insisted.

Lewis' legacy was secured in Memphis 12 months ago. He said it himself. Tyson's mummification inside The Pyramid Arena was the perfect finale, for Lewis had put on an imperious display. Now a soon-to-be 38-year-old man is consumed by the need to reinforce all that he has fought for over a 15-year period because of a bad night, his worst night, because fault lines have appeared, because he was far from imperious for those six rounds in the Staples Center. And the hard truth is that Lewis may no longer be able for the rebuilding work he has accomplished twice before in his career, when he came back from his stoppage defeats by Oliver McCall and Hasim Rahman to stop them, distinguishing himself as a fighter who has never faced a man he has not beaten.

"That was then. This is now," declared Chris Byrd, the only other conqueror of Vitali Klitschko and the holder of the IBF heavyweight belt, as he referred to Lewis' acts of vengeance and compared them to his anti-climactic victory over Klitschko. "He needs to retire. The deterioration is there for everyone to see. You could see it in the labored way he moved his legs. You could see it in how dog-tired he was as he slumped on his stool at the end of the sixth round. You can see now what he has to do. If he doesn't, he's going to tarnish all of his accomplishments. I really feel for him. Lennox has accomplished so much, but he hurt his reputation in the fight against Vitali and he could hurt it more by fighting on."

But fighting on is all he can do. There is no other way now off the road he took out of Memphis. Lewis was reassured everywhere he turned after embarking on this latest journey. He was reminded in camp in the Poconos in Pennsylvania of how he had scaled "F___ Me Hill" (so called because that is all you can say on reaching the top), a feat he had not performed since before his March 1999 fight with Holyfield. He was told that the year's layoff after his slaying of Tyson would do him good. He was encouraged to go ahead and fight his mandatory challenger, Klitschko, when his original opponent, Kirk Johnson, pulled out injured two weeks before the June 21 date. He was reassured about his weight, a career-high 256½ pounds. He was reminded of how well he fights against big men. He heard it all and he believed every word. He fell for the delusion. Then he almost fell in the second round.

"I have the highest respect for Lennox Lewis. He is a great champion. But no matter what he says about being in control of that fight, he wasn't. He was tired after two rounds. He was in no condition to be in con-

trol of the fight," said Wladimir Klitschko, who worked his brother's corner and felt, as the elder Klitschko did as well as many inside the Staples Center, that Lewis was saved by his opponent's injury. "Vitali wanted to continue despite the cut. He could see out of his left eye and he was still strong. But Lewis almost fell on his stool at the end of round six. It would have been difficult for him if the fight had gone on because of his weight and lack of condition.

"His moment to retire was after Tyson. Not a lot of guys know when to stop, and that is Lennox Lewis' mistake also. He is getting older. He says he will be in better condition for the rematch, that he only had 11 days to prepare, that Vitali was a different kind of opponent from Kirk Johnson. My brother had just the same time to prepare and, remember, he was getting ready for a 10-round fight against Cedric Boswell, not a fight for the world heavyweight championship.

"Lewis' reputation is not the best now. He has to come back and show how good he is. After Mike Tyson, he was the greatest. Now there are lots of questions. Maybe he should not fight on. But he has to."

He has to because June 21 yielded no valedictory victory. It was not the way he would ever choose to make his final bow. It showed him in a diminished light. It showed him to be vulnerable. It made him defensive to the point of being almost undignified when he was asked to put it all in context.

"Look at his face. He should count himself lucky. If we go at it again, I'll bust up the other side of his face, too," said the champion. "People might be wondering whether I should retire right now, but I want that opportunity to mess up the other side of his face.

A HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE FIGHT CUT SHORT

Los Angeles, California: Emanuel Steward was unable to sleep the night before and probably had difficulty sleeping the night after. For it was burdensome business for Lewis, 256½, London, England, for six soul-searching rounds inside the Staples Center, ending with the world heavyweight champion falling on his stool like a man returning from a long day in the mines to his bed. Lewis' salvation was that he had inflicted sufficient damage to the face of Klitschko, 246, Hamburg, Germany, via Kiev, Ukraine, to compel ringside physician Paul Wallace to advise referee Lou Moret that the mandatory challenger was in no state to continue, the vision in his left eye impaired. It was the second defense of Lewis' third title reign (second reign as linear champ) and it was fraught with difficulty from the outset.

The omens had been there. Lewis' original opponent, Kirk Johnson, pulled out two weeks before, forcing Lewis—who had been out of the ring for a whole year and was loath to face further inactivity at the ripe old age of 37—to look for an alternative challenger. Klitschko, his WBC mandatory challenger, was due to face Cedric Boswell in a 10-round undercard bout before meeting Lewis in November or December and was in the right place at the right time to capitalize on the circumstances, getting his big chance on 11 days notice. And he almost seized it sensationally.

Klitschko claimed the opening round by outworking a lethargic looking Lewis, landing a couple of sharp rights midway through. But it was the right hand he landed early in the second, that snapped back Lewis' head and led to him dominating the round, that had 15,939 fans inside the arena believing they could be witness to an upset. With his relatively fast fists, Klitschko wobbled Lewis with two more rights, and the champion's legs were unedifyingly unsteady at the bell. It looked ominous indeed.

But just as it appeared that the title might change hands, a right hand that sliced open the left eyebrow of the Ukrainian changed the course of the fight. Klitschko's cutman, Joe Sousa, was able to stick in one of his fingers to jam a wad of Vaseline into the wound, so deep was the cut. It was not quite a river of blood that flowed down the left side of the challenger's face—which also suffered laceration under the eye—but there was enough to suspect that the bout had no potential to go the distance.

Lewis came back strongly, hurting the challenger with several more rights and uppercuts and landing some telling jabs, but his lack of condition meant that by the end of the fifth round he appeared almost spent. He dug in, Klitschko's cuts got worse in the sixth, and another right uppercut and right hook had the challenger holding on at the bell.

"I would have knocked him out in another two rounds," Lewis insisted.

"He was tiring and I would have come on in the later rounds, which was always my plan," said Klitschko.

The judges all scored 58-56 for Klitschko at the conclusion of the six rounds, as did THE RING.

Television: HBO

Promoter: Gary Shaw Promotions

(6-21-03)

—BD

Klitschko battled through the blood to stake a 58-56 lead through six

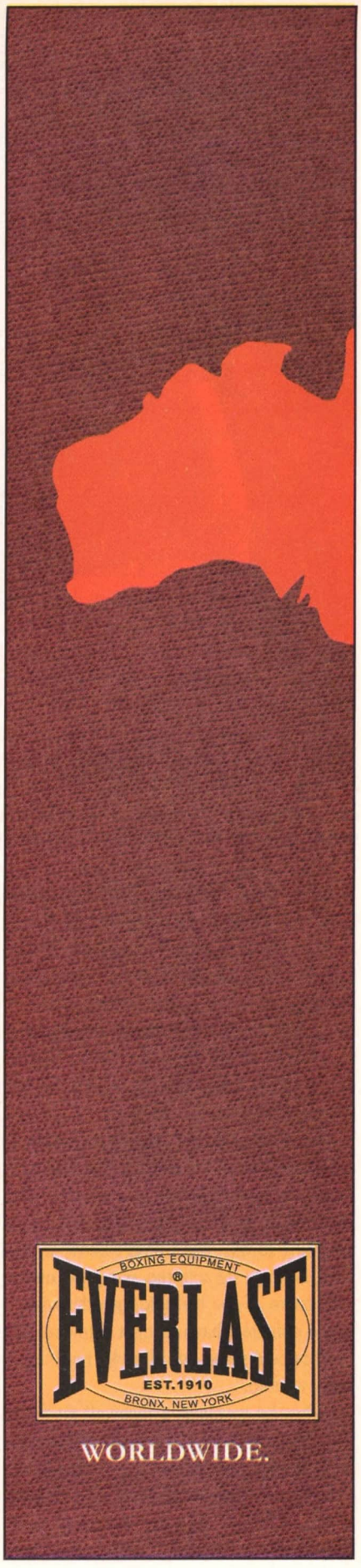
Lewis came in at a career-high 256½ pounds, and looked utterly exhausted after the fight was over. Lewis' trainer, Emanuel Steward, called it "the worst fight of Lennox's career"—which is saying something, considering Lewis has been kayoed twice.

"Listen, I was out for a year. I was going to fight Kirk Johnson in a warm-up before meeting Vitali in November. But I took a gamble fighting Klitschko at short notice and it turned out to be more of a fight that I expected. Even so, it would only have been a matter of time before he went down. I was starting to get to him with right uppercuts when the fight was stopped. I felt like I was then on top. I will know when I need to stop. If my sparring partners are beating me up and knocking me out, that's when I should no longer be getting in the ring."

But the revelation that he was confronted by more serious warfare than he had anticipated is evidence again of a fatal flaw in the Lewis armory: complacency. Complacency denied him the showdown he coveted against Riddick Bowe in the mid-1990s, for it blinded him to the wrecking ball right hand of McCall. That second-round defeat gave Bowe the leeway to look for another foe when a fight with Lewis was all but signed and sealed. Complacency took away his powers again, like a succubus in the night, when Lewis traveled to Africa and ran into another right hand, thrown this time by Rahman, a man he towered so far above that he destroyed him ruthlessly in their rematch. But the lessons, it would appear, have not been learned.

"Lennox seemed sluggish," admitted Steward, the trainer who informed us beforehand that Lewis was in the best fighting shape, that his career-high 256½ pounds of flesh was natural for a body of his age. "He couldn't get himself together, and he and I both agree that it was one of his worst performances. But the worst-case scenario, we figured, was that he fight the worst fight of his life and still beat him and he did that. I never thought it would get to that, but it did."

Klitschko's ability to rock Lewis suggested to many that deterioration is setting in. He stunned Lewis several times in the second round, and continued to land good shots in every round thereafter.



Lewis' stiff, heavy left jab was a key to his winning the fight—but not nearly as big a key as the nasty gash over Klitschko's left eye. The cut was caused by a Lewis right hand in the third round and led to the fight's conclusion at the end of the sixth.

And where might this leave him, "The Lion" in winter? Is he capable of rising again, as he has when facing adversity in the past? Only George Foreman and Jersey Joe Walcott, of his predecessors in the line that goes back to John L. Sullivan, were still successful at his age. The next time he climbs through the ropes, he will be the age Ali was when he lost to Holmes.

"I did sit down with my mother and we did have a discussion about it [retirement]," Lewis acknowledged in camp in the Poconos. "She said: 'You know what you are going to do.' But I didn't know at that time. Boxing, she told me, is not yet out of my system. If she had told me otherwise, I would definitely have thought hard about it. I feel I could go on until I'm 40, but I don't really want to."

What he wants is a farewell fit for a king. Talks with Roy Jones had begun even before Lewis' date in the City of Angels left him almost in need of one, an avenging angel perhaps. But his business with Klitschko is unfinished. If there is one more

Lewis and Klitschko left fans wanting more. If Lewis is able to get up for one more fight, it should be a big-money pay-per-view rematch with the 6'8" Ukrainian.

fight left in him, then the showdown needs to be against Klitschko. But Jones, the former middleweight master who defeated John Ruiz for the WBA heavyweight belt in March, has unique allure.

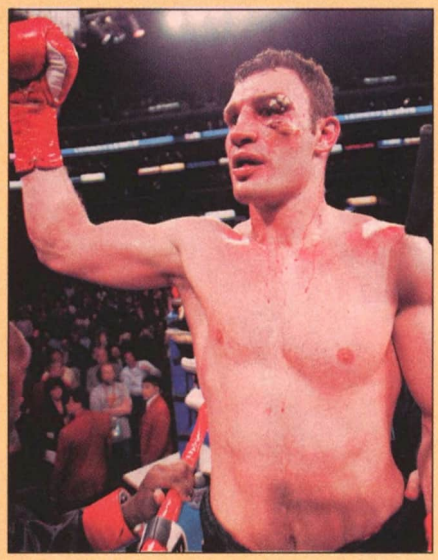
"A lot of people believe in Superman, Roy Jones," Lewis said. "And he's beginning to believe the hype, too, saying he's the best heavyweight in the world and that I'm only number three behind him and Evander Holyfield. Well, that's big talk for a little man. I've got Kryptonite and I'm looking for him."

But Jones will have looked at Lewis and will have seen what others see as the beginning of the end. When the greatest career in sport reached its climax and Muhammad Ali could not even fend off crude Canadian Trevor Berbick, the organizers of that shoddy yet poignant promotion in the Bahamas were not even able to summon a bell to ringside. They made do with a Bahamian cowbell instead, and its clank was the somber sound that signified the end of Ali. The music of Memphis, bouncing joyously through Beale Street, should have played out Lewis. Now his mission is merely to avoid hearing that cowbell, for it is the saddest note that could accompany a king to his tomb. ■

Brian Doogan, THE RING'S European correspondent, was ringside at the Staples Center for the Lewis-Klitschko fight.

QUIT-SCHKO NO MORE

Wladimir Klitschko consoled his brother as he slumped on his stool in the corner. They both felt the pain, but Vitali's suffering was greater. Four weeks before Lennox Lewis dismantled Michael Grant at Madison Square Garden, the big Ukrainian had yielded the WBO heavyweight belt to Chris Byrd. Torn ligaments in his left shoulder meant that, at the end of the ninth round, he could not fight on. The inquisition began.



Vitali felt vindicated after the controversial defeat

"The doctor who performed the surgery said the pain I went through that night would be enough to make you blind, to see black and nothing else. The pain was terrible," Klitschko responded to his accusers, among them the respected HBO broadcaster, Larry Merchant, who questioned Klitschko's heart using terms that hurt the big man. "If I had gone out for the 10th round, I could have been knocked out. Then it would be too late to say: 'Hey guys, I had an injury.' It was the only decision I could take."

Wladimir would avenge his brother's defeat, outpointing Byrd in October 2000, but they were to be characterized as Ivan Drago clones, imposing, impenetrable, and immovable until the little man in the other corner punched back.

It was the lowest point of Vitali Klitschko's life. But his growing-up years instilled in him an appreciation of the impermanence of everything, even the lowest ebb.

"My father is a colonel in the Ukrainian Air Force, based now in Kiev, but when me and my brother were younger, he was changing bases all the time and we had to move from Kyrgyzstan to Kazakhstan, from Russia to Czechoslovakia, so many moves, very interesting, but constantly moving," Klitschko recalled. "Things change constantly in your life, surroundings, circumstances. Nothing remains the same for too long."

It was a visit to the oldest living former world heavyweight champion, German idol Max Schmeling, at his home on the outskirts of Hollenstedt, that made Klitschko believe again that he could realize his ambition of being champion.

"He looked me in the eye and told me that he knew I was feeling down and that people would kick me," Klitschko recalled. "But he said that my time would come. He meant it, and his words lifted me."

They lifted Klitschko to a height where he was fully redeemed in the Staples Center, near to where he has recently made a home in Beverly Hills with his wife and two children.

"I wanted to show against Lennox Lewis that I am a good fighter. I wanted to show everybody that I'm a good fighter, that I do have heart, and I did that," he said after arriving back in Hamburg, having flown first from Los Angeles to visit his parents in Kiev. In both places he received a hero's welcome. "Lewis is a great fighter. He is the biggest, the best. But he is a little bit older all the time. He will be older, he will be heavier, he will be slower. That is why my chances to defeat him were greater if the fight had gone past the sixth round. I saw it. Lewis was losing power, losing his conditioning. I saw my chance to beat him.

"I know why the doctor made the decision he did. But I could see out of my left eye. I could see every punch. Otherwise, he would have been hurting me, and he wasn't. I want to fight him again. The rematch is down to him. I will meet him in the ring. The stitches are out and I am healing every day. You hardly see it now just over one week later. The doctor said that I can box again in 60 days, so after that I will be able to spar and to prepare for a second fight. Of course, against Roy Jones, Lewis would perhaps get more money than in another fight against me and the risk would not be so great because I am a big heavyweight and Jones is not. It is up to Lennox Lewis."

When it was up to Vitali Klitschko to show what he was made of on his biggest night, he dispelled the doubts. In his hotel room afterward, a bouquet of flowers arrived. The message was short and simple: "Best wishes from Max."

—BD

GATTI-WARD

A RIVALRY FOR THE AGES

"We Definitely Made A Mark On Boxing"

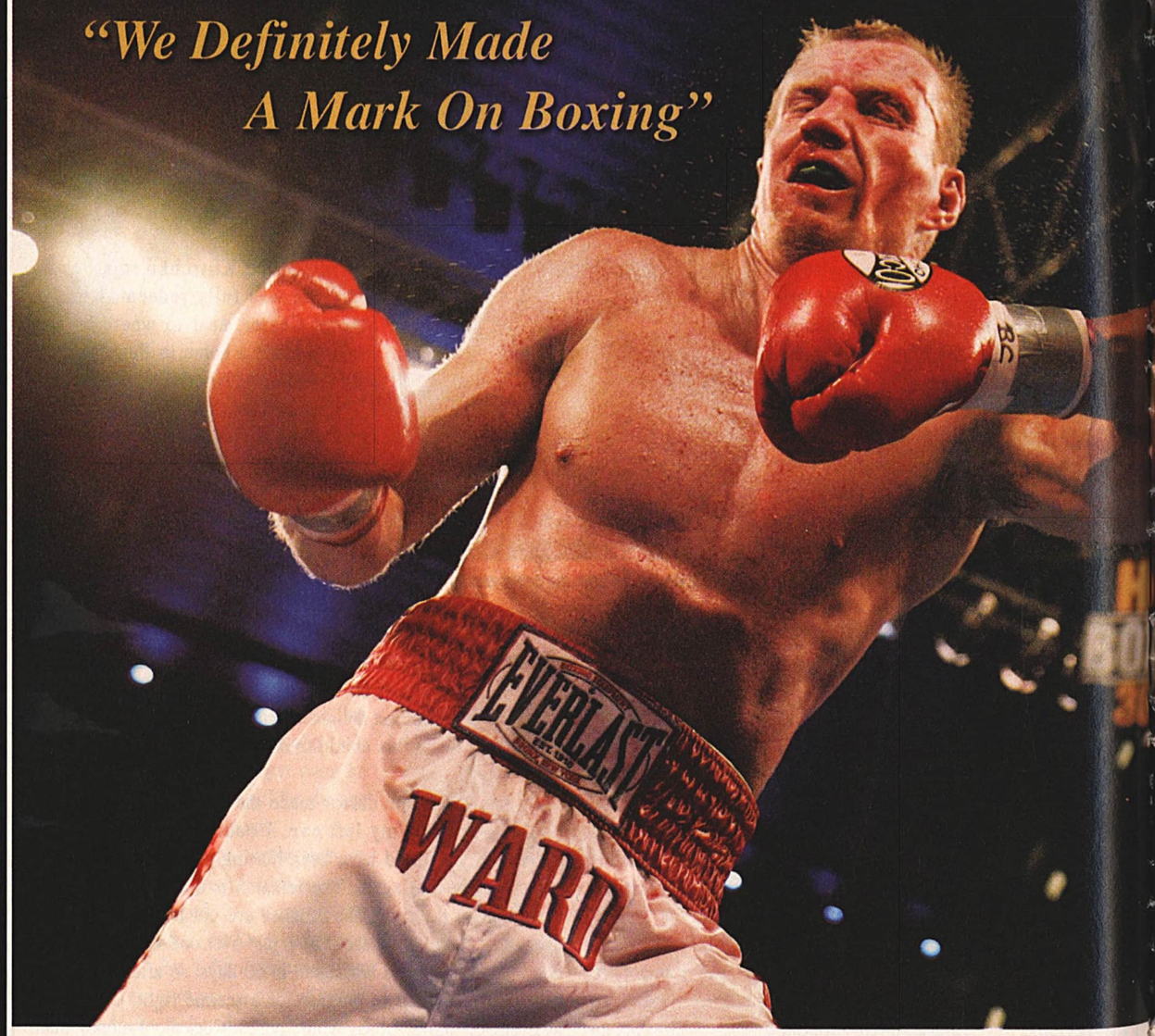


PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Ward and Gatti simultaneously crack each other on the chins during their punishing third battle. Amazingly, in all three of their fights, both of their chins held up, allowing the two courageous warriors to produce 10 rounds of first-rate action each time.

By Eric Raskin

Engaging in a spectacularly brutal first fight: $1.075-million.

Taking more vicious punishment in the rematch: $2.7-million.

Doing it one last time in the rubber match: $3.075-million.

Having your names repeated by boxing fans and historians for the rest of your lives and beyond: priceless.

For their three awe-inspiring battles with each other, Arturo Gatti and Micky Ward earned $3.9-million and $2.95-million, respectively, but knowing these guys, they'd hand over all that cash if they had to decide between keeping the money and keeping the legacy. This is, after all, not your average legacy. This is a legacy that 140-pounders with 19 combined losses, fighting in the era of cable-TV and mainstream media ignorance, aren't supposed to get within jabbing distance of. It's a legacy that may outlive the legacies of far superior contemporary fighters like Bernard Hopkins and Shane Mosley, perhaps even those of Lennox Lewis and Roy Jones. It's a legacy that will make legends of two limited warriors, their names sure to surface—and rise toward the top—every time the great three-fight rivalries of the ring are discussed from now until humanity hears the final bell.

At the top, prior to these three titanic clashes, was the Holy Trinity of trilogies: Muhammad Ali vs. Joe Frazier, Tony Zale vs. Rocky Graziano, and Riddick Bowe vs. Evander Holyfield. Now, it's a Holy Quadripartite. Gatti vs. Ward belongs somewhere among the four greatest three-fight series of all-time, and depending on what you look for in a boxing rivalry, it might even belong ahead of the other three.

In a span of 386 days, Gatti and Ward produced 30 unforgettable rounds. Their May 18, 2002, war at Mohegan Sun in Connecticut was the Fight of the Year, featuring what HBO analyst Emanuel Steward called "the round of the century." Ward won a disputed majority decision, and since all-time great action fights with inconclusive endings tend to scream for better endings, the two never-say-die fan favorites hooked it up again last November 23. In the largest-grossing non-heavyweight fight in Atlantic City history, a sellout crowd of 12,238 paid $1.6-million to see Gatti gain revenge via unanimous decision in a one-sided but dramatic encounter. The rubber match, fought on June 7, exceeded the second fight in every way, pulling even more fans (12,643) into Boardwalk Hall and nearly equaling Episode One for action and intensity. This time, Gatti got off the canvas to win a closer unanimous decision and emerge the deserving victor in this timeless blood-and-guts saga.

Gatti-Ward III was a perfect conclusion to a rivalry for which all the stars were aligned. A fighter like Gatti, whose history of heroics needs no recounting for true boxing fans, comes along once in a generation—if that. That a fighter like Ward, whom Gatti affectionately refers to as his "twin," came along at the same time, was a blessing. That they happened to fight at the same weight and were close enough in ability to make the matchup HBO-worthy was an all-out miracle. Perhaps to golf fans, the sight of an aged Jack Nicklaus and a young Tiger Woods paired with one another at the Masters gets the blood simmering. But the way the cosmos came together for Gatti-Ward, it was more like a prime Nicklaus vs. a prime Woods, with the tedium of seeing two men teeing off on tiny white balls replaced with the thrill of seeing two men

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Ward's trademark left to the body was on display in the rubber match (far left), but it was actually Gatti who did the better bodywork (left) when the junior welterweights met for the final time. Ward was badly weakened down the stretch by Gatti's earlier rib-bending rights and lefts.

tee off in a way that requires far bigger balls.

And were they ever on display in the third and final installment. After a close and, for these guys, cautious, first round, Gatti laid a beating on Ward in the second and third. Gatti's body attack was just plain nasty, and his work upstairs wasn't bad either, as evidenced by the blood gushing from Ward's nose. The thousands of fans who made the trek down from New England for Ward's final fight had very little to cheer about, as this was shaping up as a continuation of the beat-down "Irish Micky" took 7½ months earlier.

And then, 24 seconds into round four, Gatti threw a right hand that he wished immediately he could have had back. It landed on Ward's left hip, and it tore the tendon above "Thunder's" middle knuckle and caused a break in the fourth metacarpus. He grimaced and turned away, and just like that, Ward had new life. Gatti did his best to keep his unrelenting foe off with one hand, but his advantages in speed, skill, and youth just couldn't make up for Ward's advantage in functioning fists. Ward swept the exhilarating round on all cards.

Gatti came back to cut Ward over the left eye and take the fifth, and the 31-year-old Jersey boy, his right hand numbing to the point where he could at least throw it with moderately bad intentions, was cruising through the sixth as well. Until he was reminded of what happens when you cruise against Micky Ward: With two seconds left, a flush left hook followed by a right high on the head momentarily shorted Gatti's circuitry, putting him on his keister with a how-did-I-get-here look on his face. He popped up at the count of four, however, leaving Ward with a why-can't-he-stay-there look on his face.

The fight was now as close as could be (two judges had Gatti up 57-56, the third had Ward up 57-56), but at 37 years of age and with his strength sapped from Gatti's early-rounds body assault, Ward couldn't keep it close anymore. Gatti got the better of the breathtaking caveman-style action in the seventh round, and an energy-depleted Ward almost seemed content just to slow the pace and survive in the eighth and ninth. But he summoned one last burst for the final round of his career, bloodying Gatti's mouth and initiating some of the best exchanges of the fight. Yet Ward, 38-13 (27), needed another knockdown just to pull out a draw, and the truth was that Gatti had too much for him at every turn, completing a sweep of the final four rounds before falling into a deeply felt embrace as the bell rang and his friend/foe finally became just his friend. Joe Pasquale and George Hill both scored it 96-93, and Luis Rivera had it 97-92, the same as THE RING.

"Micky just proved to the world that he's a true warrior," said Gatti, 36-6 (28). "He came to fight tonight, and I respect him so much because of that.

"These three battles, we definitely made a mark on boxing."

With all those marks they made on each other's faces, there's no question they carved out a lasting impression on the sport and merit comparison to the great rivalries of the past. For pure action and consistent fight quality alone, you

FIVE ESPECIALLY ETERNAL ROUNDS

Ward's adviser, Lou DiBella, said at the press conference following Gatti-Ward III, "These were 30 eternal rounds." We agree. Here are the best of the best, five magnificently violent stanzas that stand out:

1. Fight 1, Round 9: It was the greatest round since the opener of Hagler-Hearns—and that may be selling it a little short. Ward, trailing on the cards, knocked Gatti down with a hook to the liver early in the round and dished out a hellacious follow-up beating, but Gatti roared back to pound Ward against the ropes throughout the round's second minute. Yet down the stretch, Ward took over again, nearly forcing a surrender from Gatti's corner before the bell ended these three mesmerizing minutes.

Ward struggles to find his balance in the third round of the rematch

2. Fight 3, Round 7: You don't see sustained, toe-to-toe, flat-footed slugging like this very often. Ward, determined to follow up on his knockdown at the close of the previous round, came out blazing, but it was Gatti who would get the better of the trading, wobbling Ward badly with a wicked left hook midway through the round. Ward later said he was seeing triple for the final three rounds of the fight, an unfortunate side-effect to being part of this all-time classic round.

3. Fight 2, Round 3: In his entire gutsy career, no round demonstrated the depth of Ward's guts like this one. A Gatti right hand broke Ward's eardrum and sent him down 47 seconds into the frame, and for the next two-plus minutes, it was a desperate and dramatic battle for survival. But somehow Ward pulled through, and even hurt Gatti with—what else?—a left to the body before the round was over.

4. Fight 1, Round 5: The first truly great round of the trilogy, this was three minutes of fast-paced fury by two (relatively) fresh fighters. Back and forth it went, with Gatti in control when he used his legs, and Ward in control when Gatti paused. With just a few seconds left, Gatti paused too long, and Ward turned into Sugar Micky with a rapid-fire five-punch combination that left Gatti in a fog at the bell.

5. Fight 3, Round 4: Just as round three of the second fight exemplified Ward's amazing fortitude, this stanza did the same for Gatti. He injured his right hand on Ward's hip early in the round, his face instantly turning into a tragedy mask. Ward pounced, but Gatti rallied, relying purely on his jab and his hook to stay competitive. "Thunder" weathered a breathtaking five-left-uppercut combination and came back with a triple hook off the ropes, losing the round, but surviving an injury and an onslaught that would've made quitters out of anyone else.

—ER

The most famous boxing series of all-time was Muhammad Ali vs. Joe Frazier, seen here duking it out in their third fight. While the sustained action of the Gatti-Ward trilogy may have been superior, it falls miles short of Ali-Frazier in terms of historical importance.

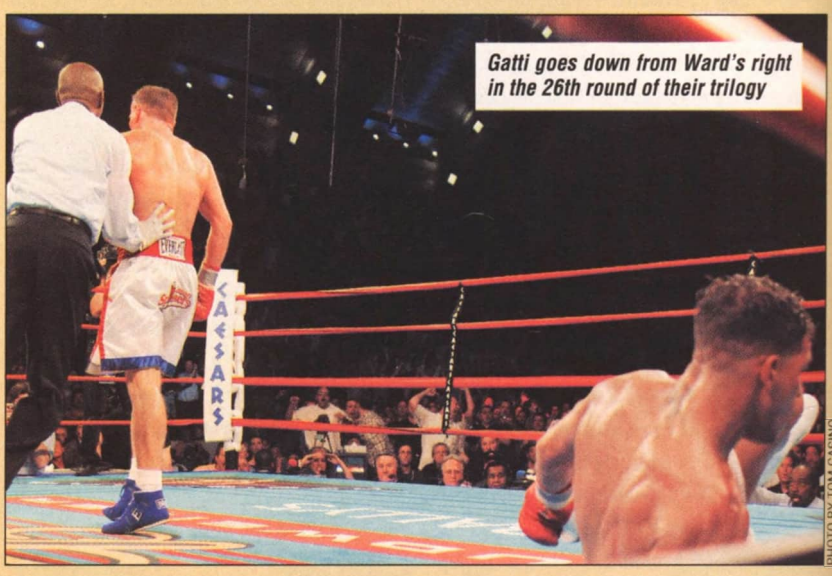
could argue that Gatti-Ward ranks first. Like the others among the four stand-out trilogies, there was one fight that was clearly not up to par with the others (in Ali-Frazier it was the second, in Zale-Graziano and Bowe-Holyfield, it was the third), but the other two were both genuine classics—and the relative "dud" that was Gatti-Ward II was at least better than the forgettable Ali-Frazier II or the blowout that was Zale-Graziano III.

Where Gatti-Ward comes up way short is in the significance of the bouts. Ali-Frazier I and III and Bowe-Holyfield I and II were for the heavyweight championship of the world. All three Zale-Graziano fights were for the world middleweight title. Gatti and Ward were simply ultra-popular top-10 contenders fighting to add to their win totals instead of their loss totals. But that just emphasizes how special their trilogy was in order to be in position to go down in history with the others.

GATTI-WARD'S GREATEST HITS

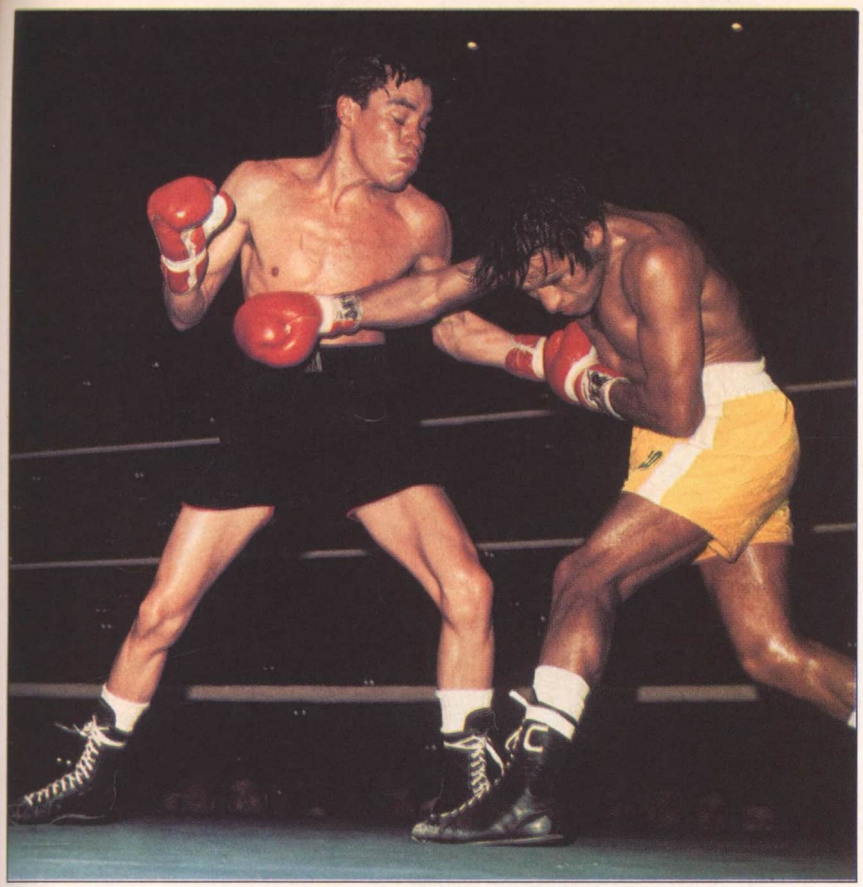
With two fighters who hit as hard as Gatti and Ward (a combined 55 knockouts in 71 wins coming into the trilogy), you're sure to see some sensational shots land. Here are the five most memorable and significant punches from these incredible slugfests:

1. Ward's hook to the body, Fight 1,



Gatti goes down from Ward's right in the 26th round of their trilogy

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO



Like Gatti and Ward, bantamweights Ruben Olivares and Chucho Castillo met three times in roughly a year. In their excellent series spanning from April 1970 to April '71, Olivares won decisions in the first and third fights, and lost via TKO in the second bout.

Round 9: With Gatti holding onto a slight lead, this left hand mere seconds into the round dropped him to a knee, turned the fight in Ward's favor, and ultimately made all the difference in who got the decision. It also came closer than any other punch in the trilogy to producing a knockout, as Gatti barely willed himself up as the number "10" was about to come out of ref Frank Cappuccino's mouth.

2. Gatti's right to the ear, Fight 2, Round 3: With one shot, both Ward's right eardrum and Gatti's right hand were broken, Ward suffered his only knockdown of the final six years of his career (an unforgettable face-first flop into the corner padding), and the outcome of the rematch was essentially sewn up. Ward's heart somehow saw him through the remainder of the bout, but he was never a serious threat to win after this right hand ricocheted off his shoulder and slammed into his left ear.

3. Gatti's right to the hip, Fight 3, Round 4: Had this punch never been thrown, Gatti probably would have prevailed in the rubber match via one-sided massacre. But instead, by injuring his right hand when it collided with Ward's hip bone, a temporarily one-fisted Gatti couldn't help but let his opponent into the fight.

4. Ward's right to the top of the head, Fight 3, Round 6: With the third fight again veering toward non-competitiveness, Ward, clearly losing the round, followed a flush left hook with a discombobulating right that dropped Gatti with just two seconds left in the round. Although Gatti recovered quickly, the three-point swing (from 10-9 Gatti to 10-8 Ward) changed the complexion of the fight.

5. Gatti's right to the chin, Fight 2, Round 3: Ward could barely stand, yet there he was, back against the ropes, balance gone, pounding on his chest and asking Gatti to hit him. Gatti obliged, and a flush right hand nearly put Ward on the deck for the second time in the round. Irish Micky would later say it was a better shot than the one that busted his eardrum a minute earlier.

—ER

"Because these trilogies are so rare today, and because the Gatti-Ward fights were all on television, it had a different kind of impact," said HBO analyst Larry Merchant. "If you're a relatively young boxing fan, the only one that's taken place that was high-profile was Bowe-Holyfield, and you had to pay to see that. This was free. This had a tremendous impact on boxing fans. It was also noteworthy because it's rare to see fighters who are main-eventers fight in this fashion anymore, because the stakes are so high today that it's hard to get them to do this.

"I don't know how the Gatti-Ward series will be remembered among the other great rivalries, but I'm sure it will be remembered for a long, long time. For years to come, they'll be invited to dinners and given standing ovations. Because of the circumstances, these guys will be feted for a long, long time."

One of the circumstances that made these wars unique is that they all occurred within roughly a year's time. The Ali-Frazier series took 4½ years to complete, Bowe-Holyfield was spread over three years, and even the Zale-Graziano brawls, which we tend to think of as being back-to-back-to-back, spanned 21 months. But outside the Holy Trinity, there were other great series between great fighters in which the rematches and the rematches to those rematches were such naturals that they had to happen immediately.

In the 1940s, Jake LaMotta and Fritzie Zivic fought four times in seven months. In LaMotta's legendary six-fight series with Sugar Ray Robinson, which stretched more than eight years, the first three fights happened in a five-month span. The outstanding four-fight lightweight series between Beau Jack and Bob Montgomery was done in 15 months. Ruben Olivares' excellent trilogy with Chucho Castillo spanned just less than 12 months. Back in 1935, Barney Ross prevailed in his third welterweight title fight with Jimmy McLarnin on the one-year anniversary of their first clash.

Of course, the great rivalries of the

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Despite a serious injury to his right hand, Gatti kept throwing it, and Ward kept taking it. The heart and determination shown by these two in all three of their punchouts will never be forgotten by any fan who witnessed it.

ring are not limited to trilogies. In addition to Robinson-LaMotta, LaMotta-Zivic, and Jack-Montgomery, one that stands out is the four-fight featherweight championship series between Sandy Saddler and Willie Pep. Probably the only reason these battles between arguably the two best 126-pounders of all-time aren't mentioned in quite the same breath as Zale-Graziano is that the fourth fight was disgracefully dirty and ugly. The four-fight series between Bobby Chacon and Bazooka Limon concluded with a Fight of the Year, and the third of four fights between Ezzard Charles and Jersey Joe Walcott was tabbed by THE RING as the best fight of 1951. And if you think Gatti and Ward got to know each other well, that's nothing compared to the marathon 20-fight series between Jack Britton and Ted "Kid" Lewis from 1915-'21, or Sam Langford's 23 fights with Harry Wills, 15 with Sam McVey, 14 with Joe Jeannette, 12 with Jim Barry, and 11 with Jeff Clarke.

Yet somehow, despite boxing's rich history of rivalries, Gatti-Ward seems destined to stand out. In addition to the obvious reason—the unreal action—there's another good explanation for why some people will insist that Gatti-Ward was as glorious as any series in history: because of the way they touched us all with their sportsmanship. Opposing fighters have gotten along before, but rarely like this.

"In here [the ring], I want to beat him more than anything in the world, but outside, he's human, he's a beautiful guy," Ward said after the third fight. "It's not about who's tougher, we're both tough guys. It's about respect. That's what kids need to know: how to respect each other."

It was the thirst for a combination of brutality and humanity that led the viewing numbers to steadily rise from just less than 2.5 million homes for the first fight to more than 3 million for the third. And it's that combination that will keep people talking about this trilogy for as long as they're talking about boxing.

"This is clearly the series that will define this era in terms of epic wars between two guys," said ESPN's Max Kellerman after soaking in the sensational final chapter.

Maybe it's best to leave it at that. There are so many variables, it's hard, ultimately, to compare Gatti-Ward with Ali-Frazier, Zale-Graziano, and the rest. We know it ranks somewhere up there. But where we know it stands apart is among its contemporaries. In the decade since Bowe-Holyfield, and for who knows how many decades to come, what Arturo Gatti and Micky Ward created will serve as the ultimate example of why boxing, at its best, provides the sort of entertainment you can't put a price on. ■

RANKING THE BEST FIGHTERS IN THE WORLD

Compiled by the Editors
Written by William Dettloff

Think about it: How many people do you know personally who are among the best in the world at what they do? If you're like most of us, the answer is none. It's because people who rank among the best at what they do are rare. (They have to be, of course, as a matter of logic.) It doesn't matter especially what one does, there generally are thousands who can do it just as well or better. Most of us fall in the middle of the population—we are average. We go to work and do our job, generally expending as little effort as we can get away with (except when we write boxing stories, of course) until we can go home and find some peace or stimulation or diversion or fantasy, and the next day we do it again and hope we can keep getting away with it before someone important notices.

The best 100 fighters in the world are not average—either as people or athletes. They represent an elite group of men already separated from the rest of the world by what they choose to do for a living, and let's face it, prize fighting is a hell of a dangerous way to make a buck. On top of that, they do it better than 99 percent of their contemporaries. They are much better at their jobs than most of us are at ours.

On the following pages, and for the eighth year now, we've selected and ranked the 100 best fighters in the world. You'll note right off the bat that some familiar names are missing. Felix Trinidad is gone, of course, as is Ricardo Lopez—both too soon, perhaps. Johnny Tapia, another regular, is missing too, and it'll be a heck of a thing if he makes it back someday. Naseem Hamed also is gone, we think because he doesn't know if he wants to be a fighter anymore.

Overall, 25 fighters who made last year's cut missed it this year, and it's not as though they're guys you never heard of—15 are former titleholders. Whatever their status, they didn't make it because they were supplanted by guys who better fit our criterion: accomplishment and ability. Where they've been and where they're going. Laurels won't get you on the list, and neither will potential. You need to have both, and it needs to have been apparent by our deadline of July 1. If your favorite guy didn't make it, don't sweat it—there's always next year.

1 ROY JONES
WBA Heavyweight Titleholder/World Light Heavyweight Champion 48-1 (38)

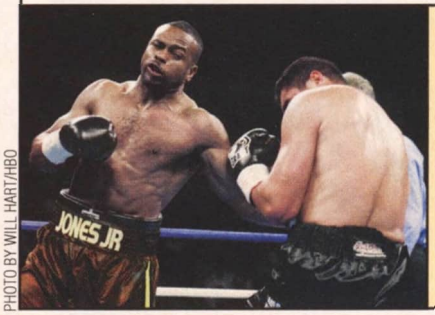


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Last Year's Ranking: 2
Status Report: Two factors conspired to vault to top position: the easy mastery of limited but tough John Ruiz (W 12) in a long anticipated move to heavyweight, and the stubborn reluctance of Bernard Hopkins, who held this spot last year, to engage any big fights. Remains, at 34, the most talented fighter alive.
Future: May take a staying-busy match against top-20 type heavyweight, but most fans want to see him fight Mike Tyson or world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis.

Jones scores to Ruiz' body

2 BERNARD HOPKINS
World Middleweight Champion 42-2-1 (31) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 1
Status Report: Squandered virtually all of the momentum gained from career-defining win over Felix Trinidad in 2001. Defended the middleweight belt just once, against undeserving mandatory Morrade Hakkar (KO 8), but in doing so revealed no degradation of skills. At age 38 still a terrific prize fighter, if not a very good manager.
Future: With attractive fight against cruiserweight titlist James Toney apparently off again, must start over in search for big fight. Time is running out.

3 MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA
World Featherweight Champion 57-3 (40)

Last Year's Ranking: 3
Status Report: In view of some, was fortunate to get decision in rematch with rival Erik Morales (W 12), but defended belt with flawless wins over Johnny Tapia (W 12) and a completely shot Kevin Kelley (KO 4). New cautious, patient style not winning new fans, but impressing the old ones.
Future: Recently separated from longtime promoter John Jackson and signed with Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions, though a legal battle may ensue. Has expressed interest in rubber match with Morales, but Morales' rising weight makes it iffy. Meeting with Juan Manuel Marquez would be ideal alternative.

4 OSCAR DE LA HOYA
World Junior Middleweight Champion 36-2 (29)

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Last Year's Ranking: 9
Status Report: Big jump based on inspired win over Fernando Vargas (KO 12), in the view of many his best in recent years. Follow-up trouncing of shopworn Yory Boy Campas (KO 7) in lucrative tune-up demonstrated "Golden Boy's" unshakeable popularity.
Future: Desire for a rematch with Shane Mosley is commendable. The outcome will go a long way toward determining the greatness of both.

Oscar lands a jab against used-up Campas

5 KOSTYA TSZYU
World Junior Welterweight Champion 30-1 (24) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 8
Status Report: Typically slow start against faded Jesse James Leija in only title defense of the year alarmed some, but the result (KO 6) was perfectly reflective of the heavy hands and relentless pressure that have become staples of the best fighter in the game's best division.
Future: Signed for dangerous rematch with deserving former WBA titlist Sharmba Mitchell, probably in Russia, but Tszyu's Achilles injury has pushed the fight back three months. Has talked recently (and finally) of moving up to welterweight and facing either Cory Spinks or amateur victim Vernon Forrest.

6 ERIK MORALES
WBC Featherweight Titleholder 44-1 (33)

Last Year's Ranking: 13
Status Report: Much higher standing the result of an excellent year: Barely lost to Marco Antonio Barrera (L 12), blew out no-hopers Eddie Cook (KO 3) and Fernando "Bobby Boy" Velardez (KO 5), and overwhelmed the smaller but excellent Paulie Ayala (W 12). After a lengthy slump, appears to have gotten back on track.
Future: If a rubber match with Barrera can't be made, may challenge Acelino Freitas or one of the lesser beltholders at junior lightweight instead.

7 FLOYD MAYWEATHER
World Lightweight Champion 30-0 (20)

Last Year's Ranking: 7
Status Report: Removed doubts around effectiveness at lightweight with sound win over Jose Luis Castillo in their rematch (W 12) and surprisingly entertaining victory over tough Victoriano Sosa (W 12). Brittle hands continue to be a problem for one of the game's best pure boxers.
Future: Won't get Oscar De La Hoya, but may get Arturo Gatti or Paul Spadafora. Leo Dorin and Juan Lazcano also are short-term possibilities. The options are many, especially if there's a move to 140.

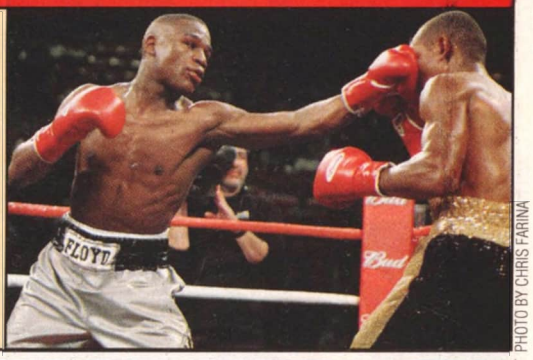


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Speedy Mayweather jabs game challenger Sosa

8 RICARDO MAYORGA
World Welterweight Champion 24-3-1 (22)

Last Year's Ranking: 30
Status Report: Exploded into upper echelon with upset knockout victory over Vernon Forrest (KO 3) to win title. Wild and unorthodox, must be viewed as one of the game's more dangerous punchers inside the ring and one of its more colorful outside of it.
Future: Rematch with Forrest. If he wins it, he remains among boxing's elite and perhaps becomes an all-out superstar. If he loses, he'll still beat most of the welterweight top 10 even if he's remembered ultimately as a one-hit wonder. By the time you read this, you'll know which it is.

9 VERNON FORREST
Welterweight 35-1 (26) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 4
Status Report: Got points for proving first win over Shane Mosley was no fluke with solid if unspectacular victory in rematch (W 12). But knockout loss to Ricardo Mayorga (KO by 3) changed everything, perhaps unfairly. Remains world class boxer-puncher.
Future: Must avenge loss to Mayorga, emphatically, in July rematch if he expects to remain among boxing's elite players.

Forrest and Mosley bang heads

10 SHANE MOSLEY
Junior Middleweight 38-2 (35) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 6
Status Report: Downward trend continues. Was slightly more successful in rematch against rival Vernon Forrest, but no more victorious, and suffered his second loss in a row (L 12). Move to 154 pounds may have been ill-advised; was not overly impressive against shopworn former titlist Raul Marquez (No-Contest 3).
Future: Legacy reliant almost entirely upon result of rematch with Oscar De La Hoya. If he loses, we may look back on him someday as we do Donald Curry.

11 LENNOX LEWIS
World Heavyweight Champion 41-2-1 (32)

Last Year's Ranking: 10
Status Report: In first fight in a year, barely survived sloppy, exciting slugfest with Vitali Klitschko (KO 6), which raised questions about his age—he's 37—and his motivation. Looked nothing like the fighter who dominated Mike Tyson a year before, but may have been made by Klitschko's awkwardness to look worse than he really was.
Future: Most attractive of several options and the fairly likely one is immediate rematch with Klitschko, followed by a possible megafight with Roy Jones or perhaps retirement.

12 ACELINO FREITAS
WBA Super Featherweight "Super" Titleholder 33-0 (30)

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Last Year's Ranking: 21
Status Report: Defended belt twice, shutting out mandatory challenger Daniel Attah (W 12) and blowing out overmatched Juan Carlos Ramirez (KO 4). Has developed into a versatile and technically sound boxer-puncher who can slug with abandon or box and move.
Future: Interesting rematch with former titleholder Joel Casamayor a possibility.

Freitas cracks outgunned Ramirez with a right

13 JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
IBF Featherweight Titleholder 40-2 (32)

Last Year's Ranking: 29
Status Report: Has finally come into his own. Stopped Hector Marquez (KO 10) in tune-up and then annihilated tricky Manuel Medina (KO 7) to claim vacant IBF crown. Heavy hands and world-class skills make him, at worst, the third best featherweight in the world.
Future: Likely will make fairly soft first defense, probably against William Abelyan. Dream scenario would be to challenge winner of Barrera-Morales III, if it happens.

14 RAFAEL MARQUEZ
IBF Bantamweight Titleholder 29-3 (27)

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Last Year's Ranking: 46
Status Report: Fulfilled early promise with come-from-behind knockout of the excellent Tim Austin (KO 8). Was rattled early, but stormed back to overwhelm aging titlist and stake claim as world's best 118-pounder.
Future: Doesn't have his brother Juan Manuel's chin, but shares heavy hands and exciting style. Plenty of good fights to be made in bantamweight class.

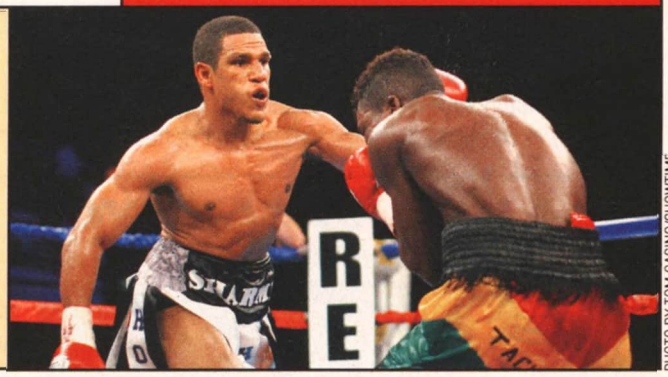
Marquez takes Austin's bantam belt

15 VEERAPOL SAHAPROM
WBC Bantamweight Titleholder 41-1-1 (29)

Last Year's Ranking: 17
Status Report: One of the world's best bantams still on a tear at age 34, with wins over Darwin Bermudez (KO 3), Alex Escaner (KO 6), Nathan Barcelona (KO 6), and tough Hugo Dianzo (W 12).
Future: September defense against mandatory challenger Toshiaki Nishioka won't be easy; they already fought to a 12-round draw in September '01. Unfortunately, unification showdowns with Rafael Marquez or Johnny Bredahl are unlikely.

16 SHARMBA MITCHELL
Junior Welterweight 52-3 (30)

Last Year's Ranking: 35
Status Report: This is the way you rebuild a career: After losing to Kostya Tszyu in 2001, whipped Bernard Harris (W 10), Frank Houghtaling (W 10), Vince Phillips (W 10), Carlos Vilches (KO 4), and Ben Tackie (W 12).
Future: A well-deserved and hard-earned rematch with Tszyu once the champion recovers from a leg injury.



Mitchell on the attack against Tackie

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

17 JOSE LUIS CASTILLO
Lightweight 46-6-1 (42)

Last Year's Ranking: 12
Status Report: Fair-and-square loss to Floyd Mayweather in rematch (L 12) took some of the luster off world's second best lightweight. Had his moments, but never threatened the way he did in first fight. Returned with June kayo of overmatched Gustavo Corral (KO 5) in California.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time, but with things heating up at 135, there's lots of opportunity.

18 FERNANDO VARGAS
Junior Middleweight 22-2 (20)

Last Year's Ranking: 14
Status Report: Loss to Oscar De La Hoya (KO by 11) places Vargas clearly a full rung below the elite, despite the closeness of the thrilling bout. Subsequent suspension for steroid use didn't help, even if Vargas handled the investigation and penalty professionally.
Future: Must impress in soft comeback fight against Fitz Vanderpool in July. Remains to be seen what effect second brutal knockout loss of pro career will have on psyche and punch resistance.

19 CHRIS BYRD
IBF Heavyweight Titleholder 36-2 (20)

Last Year's Ranking: 53
Status Report: Convincing win over Evander Holyfield (W 12) netted skilled southpaw IBF heavyweight title, but he remains one of the most avoided fighters in the business regardless. Has the style to trouble any heavyweight in the world.
Future: At this writing, the top spot in the IBF heavyweight ratings is vacant, so don't expect a mandatory challenger anytime soon. Has to be the only titlist in the business who can't get anyone to fight him. And that's with Don King as his promoter.

Defense-first Byrd goes on the offense against Holyfield

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

20 WINKY WRIGHT
IBF Junior Middleweight Titleholder 45-3 (25)

Last Year's Ranking: 19
Status Report: Despite possession of the IBF 154-pound belt, veteran southpaw still unable to secure a big-money fight. Wins over Bronco McKart (W Disq. 8) and J.C. Candelo (W 12) didn't help much.
Future: Won't get Oscar De La Hoya, though one-time conqueror Fernando Vargas has said he'd fight Wright again, and if Vargas thought a win could get him De La Hoya again, he'd do it. Mandatory challenger Kassim Ouma no pushover.

21 JAMES TONEY
IBF Cruiserweight Titleholder 66-4-2 (42)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Capped off unlikely comeback with stirring and technically picturesque win over Vassiliy Jirov (W 12) to win the title. When in condition and matched against right kind of opponent, remains a highly formidable and entertaining fighter.
Future: An interesting 10-round heavyweight fight in October against Evander Holyfield. (Really, how long did you expect him to stay at 190 pounds?)

22 JOEL CASAMAYOR
Junior Lightweight 29-1 (18)

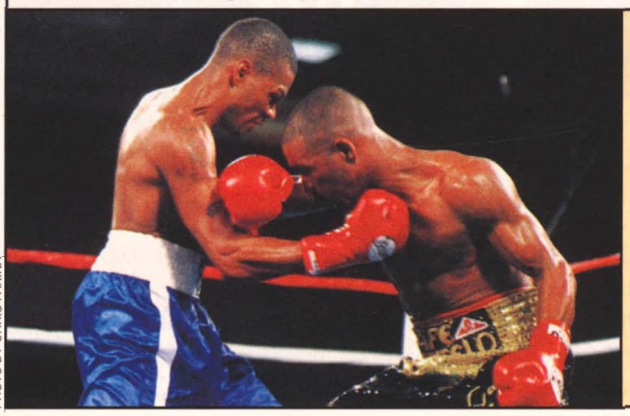


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Last Year's Ranking: 22
Status Report: Rebounded from loss to Acelino Freitas with wins over Yoni Vargas (KO 5) and highly regarded Nate Campbell (W 10). Surged over second half of Campbell match to outclass opponent down the stretch. Amateur background at world-class level and solid skills give him an edge on just about every 130-pounder.
Future: Critically important rematch with WBA titleholder Freitas has been discussed, but bouts with Phillip Ndou and Derrick Gainer are also possibilities.

Casamayor (right) exchanges right hands with Campbell

23 ROSENDO ALVAREZ
World Junior Flyweight Champion 32-2-1 (21)

Last Year's Ranking: 20
Status Report: Survived another close one with rival Bebis Mendoza (W 12) in only fight of the year. Came on late after Mendoza took early lead, and decision could easily have gone other way. May be slowing down, but still the class of the division.
Future: As we went to press, was scheduled to defend against highly rated former WBC titlist Yosam Choi of South Korea.

24 JOE CALZAGHE
Super Middleweight 36-0 (29)

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Last Year's Ranking: 27
Status Report: Exciting win over former WBA titleholder Byron Mitchell (KO 2) places Calzaghe at the top of 168-pound division and makes up for meaningless recent victories over Miguel Jimenez (W 12) and Tocker Pudwill (KO 2).
Future: If things fall together, the timing may be right for a match with middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins, who was still looking for a big fight as we went to press.

Calzaghe gets the job done against limited Jimenez

25 SVEN OTTKE
IBF/WBA Super Middleweight Titleholder 31-0 (6)

Last Year's Ranking: 32
Status Report: Against his most accomplished foe to date, won a close decision over WBA counterpart Byron Mitchell (W 12). Also beat Joe Gatti (KO 9), Rudy Markussen (W 12), and David Starie (W 12) on the way to notching division record 18 title defenses.
Future: Will continue for as long as there are 168-pound fighters who are willing to go to Germany and get outboxed.

26 PAULIE AYALA
World Junior Featherweight Champion 34-2 (12)

Last Year's Ranking: 15
Status Report: Move to featherweight against Erik Morales was disastrous, as soft-spoken Texan was given worst beating of his career (L 12) and, at this writing, hasn't fought since.
Future: Plenty of good fights to be made at junior feather, ideally against Manny Pacquiao or Oscar Larios.

27 ANTONIO TARVER
WBA/IBF Light Heavyweight Titleholder 21-1 (17)

Last Year's Ranking: 57
Status Report: Significant jump due to revenge win over Eric Harding (KO 5) and solid victory over highly rated and tricky veteran Montell Griffin (W 12). For our money he's the best at 175 so long as Roy Jones is a heavyweight.
Future: Talented southpaw claims willingness to take on all the fighters Jones wouldn't, which may mean trip to Germany to fight Dariusz Michalczewski.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Tarver proves too much for Griffin

28 DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI
Light Heavyweight 48-0 (38)

Last Year's Ranking: 24
Status Report: It seems silly now that there was once so much noise around a fight with Roy Jones. Still, undefeated Pole is having success going about the business of whipping former Jones victims. However, wins over Richard Hall (KO 10) and Derrick Harmon (KO 9) were especially hard-earned and perhaps indicative of declining skills.
Future: Continued triumphs against second-tier light heavyweight competition, but extreme danger if an Antonio Tarver bout is arranged.

29 MASAMORI TOKUYAMA
WBC Super Flyweight Titleholder 29-2-1 (8)

Last Year's Ranking: 28
Status Report: Has stayed busy, making three successful defenses in the past 12 months. Blew out overmatched Erik Lopez (KO 6), scored second close win over Gerry Penalosa (W 12), and then turned back challenger Katsushige Kawashima (W 12).
Future: WBC mandatory is Dimitry Kirilov, but we'd much rather see him against Alexander Munoz or the exciting Fernando Montiel.

30 ERIC MOREL
WBA Flyweight Titleholder 33-0 (18)

Last Year's Ranking: 39
Status Report: Strong performances against tough Denkaosaen Kaowichit (KO 11) and Isidro Garcia (W 12) typical of world's best flyweight. A born boxer with great legs, "Little Hands Of Steel" now developing an increasing tendency to stand and fight just to make things more exiting. Has defended title five times since winning it in 2000.
Future: If match against fellow titlist Irene Pacheco can't be made, don't be surprised by a jump to junior bantamweight.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Flyweight king Morel fires a left at Denkaosaen

31 TIM AUSTIN
Bantamweight 25-1-1 (22)

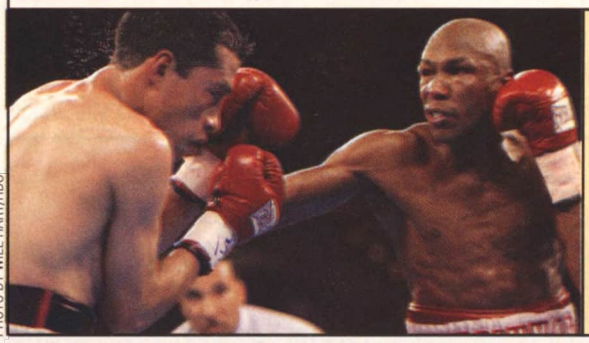


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

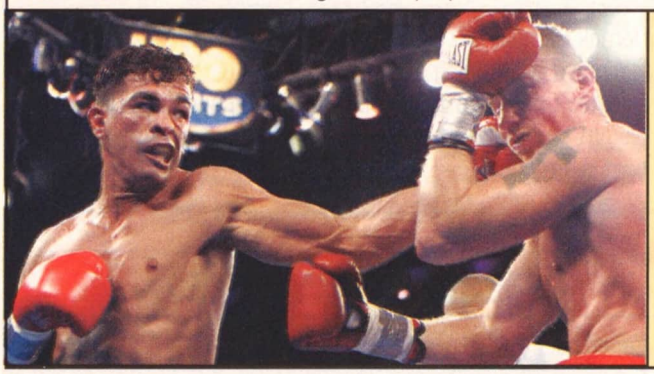
Last Year's Ranking: 16
Status Report: Was brilliant in title defense against tough Adan Vargas (KO 10), but seven months later was stopped by Rafael Marquez (KO by 8) in a war for first career defeat. Had Marquez hurt early, but was caught by a hook and couldn't recover.
Future: Don King has promised a long overdue move to junior feather, but at age 32 and with long stretches of inactivity, great success at 122 is unlikely. Recent rape accusations against "The Cincinnati Kid" won't help.

Austin whips Vargas in his last successful title defense

32 MANNY PACQUIAO
IBF Junior Featherweight Titleholder 36-2-1 (27)

Last Year's Ranking: 34
Status Report: Wins over Fahprakorb Rakkiatgym (KO 1) and Serikzhan Yeshmangbetov (KO 5) aesthetically pleasing, but not overly meaningful because neither were top-10 guys. In fact, Yeshmangbetov was a mere tune-up that turned scary when Pacquiao took a trip to the canvas.
Future: By the time you are reading this, will have met and probably stopped young challenger Emmanuel Lucero.

33 ARTURO GATTI
Junior Welterweight 36-6 (28)



Last Year's Ranking: 62
Status Report: Two thrilling decision wins over Micky Ward have revived a career that was sagging badly two years ago. Gatti responds well to trainer Buddy McGirt, and his willingness to box and move on legs that, impossibly, still have some spring left in them, has rejuvenated him. He's a threat to any 140-pounder out there.
Future: Possibly a date with lightweight champ Floyd Mayweather. More likely a mid-range contender will come first.

Gatti gets revenge in his second fight with Ward

34 PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM
WBC Flyweight Titleholder 47-2 (25)

Last Year's Ranking: 38
Status Report: One of the busier titlists around, defended three times in the last year, beating Jesus Martinez (W 12), Hidenobu Honda (W 12), and Randy Mangubat (W 12). At just 26 years old, is very experienced for his age, hits harder than those three straight decision wins suggest, has the advantage of being a southpaw, and shows no signs of slowing down. Second only to excellent Eric Morel among flyweights.
Future: Probable defense against undeserving mandatory Hussein Hussein.

35 STEVE JOHNSTON
Lightweight 35-2-1 (17)

Last Year's Ranking: 18
Status Report: Has fought just once since last year's impressive win over Alejandro Gonzalez, that a stoppage of Ever Beleno in California (KO 6). Is supposed to face Juan Lazcano in WBC title eliminator, but ongoing legal problems may scuttle important bout.
Future: Was starting to show signs of wear even before long layoff. At 30 years old and with a lot of hard fights on his ledger, is running out of time.

36 ZAB JUDAH
Junior Welterweight 28-1 (21) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 36
Status Report: Recovered well enough from loss to Kostya Tszyu by outpointing tricky and tough Omar Weis (W 10) in Mississippi. Ate his share of right crosses, but remained composed and fought effectively in spurts—then didn't fight for a full year as he sorted out contract problems.
Future: By the time you read this, will have fought highly rated DeMarcus Corley in immensely important grudge match.

37 DeMARCUS CORLEY
Junior Welterweight 28-1-1 (16)

Last Year's Ranking: 45
Status Report: Slick, Washington, D.C.-based southpaw tied slugger Randall Bailey in knots on way to easy victory (W 12). Is exceptionally fast, but as shown in win over Bailey, also can be exceptionally dull. Has the tools to excel in talent-laden 140-pound class.
Future: In a fascinating match, will have fought former titlist Zab Judah by the time you read this.

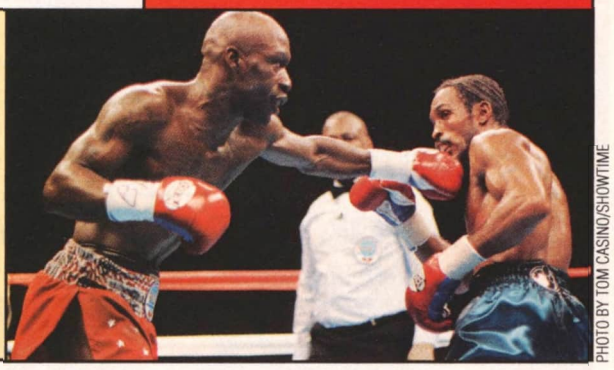


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Corley keeps Bailey off with a jab

38 OSCAR LARIOS
WBC Super Bantamweight Titleholder 48-3-1 (33)

Last Year's Ranking: 54
Status Report: Excellent boxer-puncher followed up title-winning blowout of Willie Jorrin (KO 1) with victories over Marcos Licona (W 10) and Shigeru Nakazato (W 12) in Japan. Has shown tremendous and steady improvement over last few years.
Future: August defense against challenger Kozo Ishii in Tokyo, then hopefully a showdown with either Paulie Ayala or Manny Pacquiao.

39 ALEXANDER MUNOZ
WBA Super Flyweight Titleholder 23-0 (23)

Last Year's Ranking: 41
Status Report: Hard-slugging Venezuelan overwhelmed challenger Eiji Kojima (KO 2) in Japan last July to continue impressive knockout streak. It was first defense of title won four months earlier, but he's been inactive since, due in part to getting shot in the knee. A born slugger who likes to get in there and punch.
Future: Likely next defense against Sornipichai Pisnurachank, though we'd love to see him against Masamori Tokuyama, Fernando Montiel, or Martin Castillo.

40 FERNANDO MONTIEL
Junior Bantamweight 26-0-1 (20)

Last Year's Ranking: 68
Status Report: Flashy 115-pounder had good year with wins over ill-fated Pedro Alcazar (KO 6), Roy Doliguez (KO 3), and Ruben Sanchez Leon (KO 2). Best pure boxer in the division reminds some of a young Johnny Tapia.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time, but interesting match against undefeated Colombian puncher Luis Bolano likely.

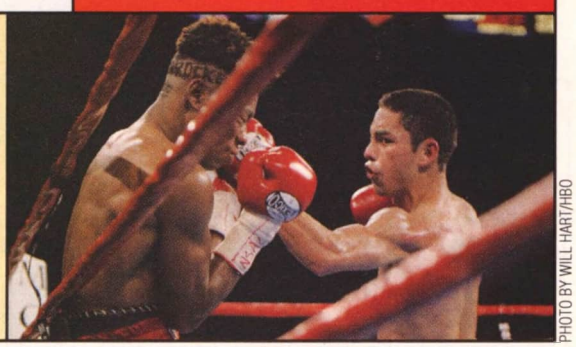


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Montiel looks to finish in tragic win over Alcazar

41 ANTONIO MARGARITO

Welterweight 28-3 (19) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 40
Status Report: Is on a significant tear: After exciting victory over Antonio Diaz in March '02, scored wins over Danny Perez (W 12) and former titleholder Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis (KO 2). Is a tough, tireless, 25-year-old puncher who has improved tremendously over last few years.
Future: May get a shot at Ricardo Mayorga-Vernon Forrest winner. There aren't many other marquee opponents at welterweight.

42 LEONARD DORIN

WBA Lightweight Titleholder 21-0-1 (7)

Last Year's Ranking: 49
Status Report: In only fight in the past year, did enough in eyes of many to take IBF title from Paul Spadafora in close, taut slugfest (D 12) that drew blood from both. Makes up for lack of power with conditioning, grit, and pretty fair technique. Volume punching and ability to withstand punishment on the way in make Montreal-based Romanian a tough assignment for anyone.
Future: Rematch with Spadafora at 140 pounds is possible, as is a showdown in Canada with Arturo Gatti.

43 PAUL SPADAFORA

Junior Welterweight 36-0-1 (14)

PHOTO BY STEVE MATTEO/HBO

Last Year's Ranking: 47
Status Report: Typically pedestrian win over Dennis Holbaek Pedersen (W 12) followed up with exciting, bloody slugfest with Leo Dorin (D 12). Wanted to prove he could stand and fight, and he did, but paid a heavy fare. Decision easily could have gone Dorin's way.
Future: Jumping to junior welterweight, where he may have a rematch with Dorin or possibly a bout with Arturo Gatti.

Dorin and Spadafora battle to a draw

44 VIVIAN HARRIS

WBA Super Lightweight Titleholder 22-1-1 (16)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: After loss to Ray Oliveira in 2000, is undefeated in seven straight, including important victories over Ubaldo Hernandez (W 12) and favored Diobelys Hurtado (KO 2), the latter for the illegitimate WBA title. A long-armed puncher with good skills.
Future: Will have fought unknown mandatory Souleymane M'Baye by the time you read this.

45 JORGE ARCE

WBC Light Flyweight Titleholder 34-3-1 (25)

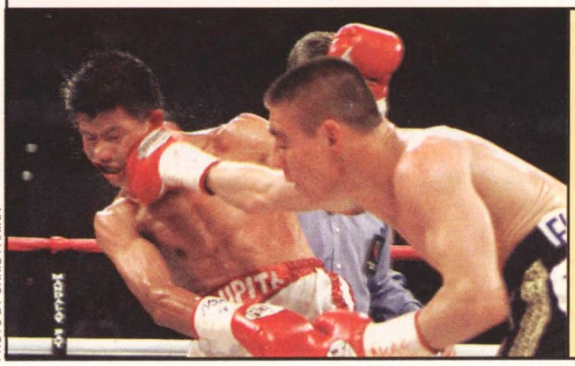


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: World's second best 108-pounder had busy year with wins over Yosam Choi (KO 6) to capture WBC belt, Agustin Luna (KO 3), Ernesto Castro (KO 1), Lee Sandoval (KO 2), and Melchor Cob-Castro (Tech. Win 6). He's rapidly cutting the gap between himself and Rosendo Alvarez.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time and mandatory satisfied with win over Cob-Castro. Killing himself to make 108 pounds, however, so a move up probably isn't far off.

Arce rocks Luna with a right

46 BEBIS MENDOZA
Junior Flyweight 28-2 (23)

Last Year's Ranking: 51
Status Report: Dropped another squeaker to rival Rosendo Alvarez (L 12) in a fight that could have gone either way. Started well but faded late under Alvarez' pressure.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time. We'd love to see him against Jorge Arce, Yosam Choi, Nelson Dieppa, or another top-10 contender. We'd also love to see him fight more than once in the next 12 months.

47 CORRIE SANDERS
Heavyweight 39-2 (29)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Was semi-retired before scoring shocking kayo of top-rated Wladimir Klitschko in March (KO 2). Giant southpaw has a heavy left cross and deceptively fast hands and is especially dangerous in early rounds.
Future: August match in South Africa against tune-up type, and after that, bombs-away bout with David Tua.

PHOTO BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

Sanders drops Klitschko face-first

48 VASSILIY JIROV
Cruiserweight 31-1 (27)

Last Year's Ranking: 42
Status Report: Fought well and hard in loss to James Toney (L 12) in long-anticipated title fight, and remains probably second-best cruiserweight in the world. Showed well-established grit, stamina, and determination, but took too many flush shots from one of the game's best and slickest counterpunchers.
Future: By the time you read this, will have started rebuilding process with July date against little-known James Walton.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Jirov lands a left in epic battle with Toney

49 VITALI KLITSCHKO
Heavyweight 32-2 (31)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Would not appear on these pages if not for spirited effort against world champion Lennox Lewis in June. Previously had some good wins against top-20 types Vaughn Bean (KO 11) and Larry Donald (KO 10), but those meant nothing compared to the way his awkwardness and deceptively fast hands had him beating Lewis on all cards at time of cut-induced stoppage.
Future: After numerous cuts heal, rematch against Lewis.

50 JOHNNY BREDAHL
WBA Bantamweight Titleholder 53-2 (26)

Last Year's Ranking: 33
Status Report: In only fight of the last year, defended against aged former beltholder Leo Gamez (W 12) in Copenhagen and failed to impress. Stylish boxer needs to fight more often—and preferably on this side of the Atlantic occasionally.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time and top two spots in WBA rankings are vacant. At nearly 35 years of age, needs to make a move.

51 DIEGO CORRALES
Junior Lightweight 37-1 (31)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Loss to Floyd Mayweather in 2001 and an almost two-year layoff due to legal trouble didn't diminish Corrales' punching power. Has stopped Michael Davis (KO 5), Roque Cassiani (KO 1), Felix St. Kitts (KO 3), and Damian Fuller (KO 3). Appears to be back in peak form.
Future: A stay at 130 pounds, which is surprising for 6' bomber. Could challenge Acelino Freitas in intriguing punchers' showdown.

52 WILLIAM JOPPY
WBA Middleweight Titleholder 34-2-1 (25)

Last Year's Ranking: 48
Status Report: In just his second fight since knockout loss to Felix Trinidad, topped Naotaka Hozumi (KO 10) in Tokyo last October in defense of ridiculous WBA title. Idle since. Still a competent boxer with good all-around skills.
Future: Nothing scheduled. Probably would like to be more active, but contract with Don King and stagnant middleweight division working against him.

53 JESUS CHAVEZ
Junior Lightweight 39-2 (28)

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Last Year's Ranking: 55
Status Report: Wins over Julio Cesar Sanchez Leon (KO 7), Johnny Walker (KO 6), and Carlos Gerena (KO 6) put Chavez in line for title he failed to win against Floyd Mayweather in 2001. Is a tireless puncher and sports the best body attack in the division.
Future: An August match with veteran Sirimongkol Singmanassak for the WBC belt.

Chavez' pressure overwhelms Gerena

54 JOSE AGUIRRE
WBC Strawweight Titleholder 30-1-1 (19)

Last Year's Ranking: 79
Status Report: Defended title three times in last year, winning a narrow decision over Juan Palacios, then stopping Juan Alfonso Keb (KO 7) and Keitaro Hoshino (KO 12). Is the class of the division, and at age 28, his best work may be ahead of him.
Future: A defense against dangerous Kermin Guardia is a possibility. After that, we'd love to see him against fast-rising Ivan Calderon.

55 ANTWUN ECHOLS
Super Middleweight 29-4-1 (26)

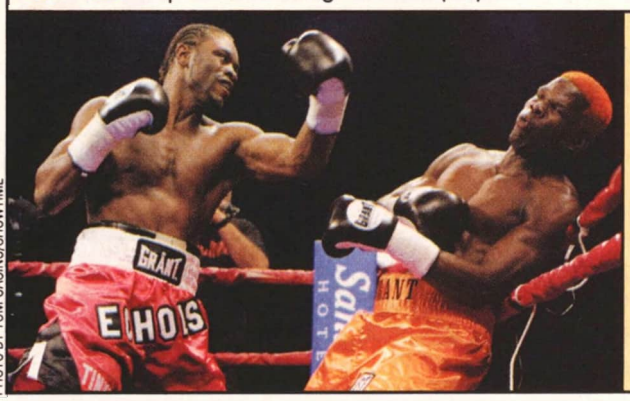


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Last Year's Ranking: 64
Status Report: Wins this year over Oscar Bravo (KO 1) and Richard Grant (KO 3) did nothing to diminish Echols' stature as the best puncher and arguably the most exciting fighter in the 168-pound division.
Future: An August showdown with eccentric Anthony Mundine in Australia. A win should get him a shot against WBA/IBF beltholder Sven Ottke, for whom he is the mandatory challenger.

Powerful Echols has his way with Grant

56 IRENE PACHECO
IBF Flyweight Titleholder 27-0 (20)

Last Year's Ranking: 59
Status Report: In only ring appearance in the last year, defended against Alejandro Montiel in Texas (W 12) in a bloody, entertaining battle. Must be more active if he hopes to get bigger-money fight against division's only American name, WBA beltholder Eric Morel.
Future: Nothing scheduled, and top two positions in IBF ratings are vacant.

57 HOWARD EASTMAN
Middleweight 37-1 (34)

Last Year's Ranking: 65
Status Report: Has been fairly busy since performing well in debatable loss to William Joppy, winning five straight by knockout—but entirely in England and against nondescript competition.
Future: Scheduled to face worn-down ex-titlist Hassine Cherifi in late-July. Is Bernard Hopkins' WBC mandatory and probably won't take any chances (no, Cherifi doesn't count as taking a chance) until mandatory is enforced.

58 JAVIER CASTILLEJO
Junior Middleweight 55-5 (37)

Last Year's Ranking: 67
Status Report: Claimed WBC's ridiculous "interim" title with good win over previously unbeaten Roman Karmazin (W 12) in Spain. Followed up with stoppage of once-beaten Diego Castillo (KO 1). Clearly belongs among top five challengers at 154.
Future: Is Oscar De La Hoya's WBC mandatory—a worthless designation that the WBC will never enforce. May get a well-paying bout with Fernando Vargas instead, though.

59 DERRICK GAINER
WBA Featherweight Titleholder 39-5-1 (24) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 71
Status Report: Talented southpaw plagued by bad luck and uneven performances. Over the last year, mandatory against Daniel Seda was going very well until stopped on a headbutt-induced cut (No-Contest 2) and April defense against Oscar Leon (W 12) was tougher than anticipated.
Future: Though not scheduled yet at press time, an unnecessary rematch with Leon has been absurdly mandated by the WBA.

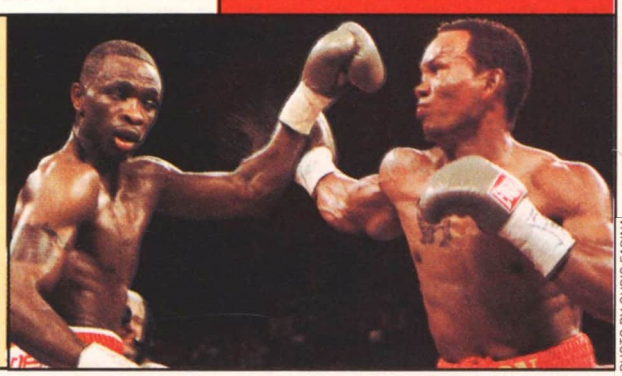


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Gainer intercepts a right from Leon

60 SCOTT HARRISON
Featherweight 19-1-1 (9)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Good wins over Victor Santiago (KO 6) and Julio Pablo Chacon (W 12) led to surprising thrashing of Wayne McCullough (W 12) in obvious breakthrough fight. Knockout ratio is misleading—a strong puncher with solid fundamentals.
Future: By the time you read this, will have fought former titleholder Manuel Medina in another good test.

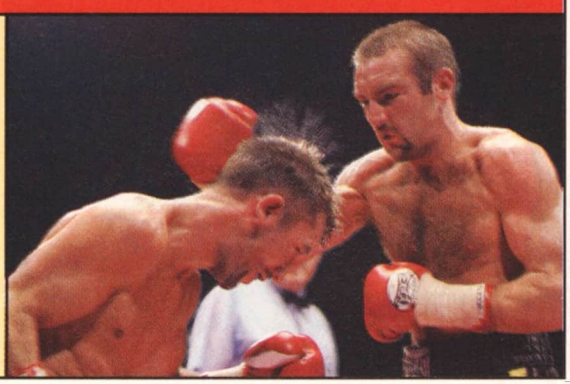


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Harrison hammers overmatched McCullough

61 MIGUEL COTTO
Junior Welterweight 16-0 (13)

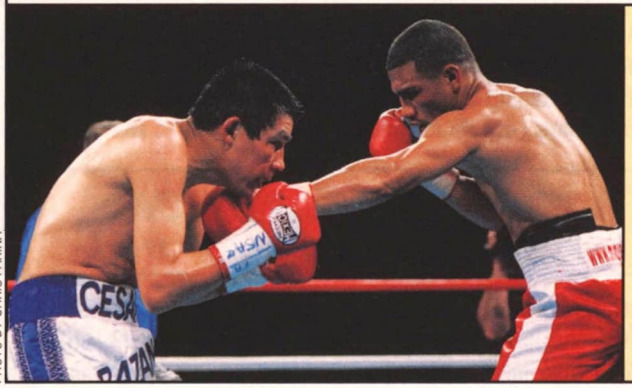


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Destroyed normally durable veteran Rocky Martinez with a sickening bodyshot (KO 2) in June. Before that, beat five other credible opponents in last 12 months, including Cesar Bazan (KO 11) and Ubaldo Hernandez (KO 7). Punching power just one element of budding star's attack.
Future: Title shot by this time next year. Pay-per-view bout with Victoriano Sosa on the table for September.

Cotto measures Bazan in crossroads clash

62 EVANDER HOLYFIELD
Heavyweight 38-6-2 (25)

Last Year's Ranking: 56
Status Report: Momentum gained from win over Hasim Rahman last year was lost when Chris Byrd decisioned him (L 12). Claimed rotator cuff injury hampered him, but from the way it looked, he could have had three good arms and it wouldn't have helped.
Future: Interesting pay-per-view match with cruiserweight titlist James Toney set for October 4.

64 JUAN LAZCANO
Lightweight 32-2-1 (24)

Last Year's Ranking: 69
Status Report: "Hispanic Causing Panic" still staying busy and not taking chances while waiting for WBC to enforce Floyd Mayweather's mandatory, beating David Armstrong (KO 6) and Danny Rios (Tech. Win 9). Scheduled to face legally troubled Steve Johnston in eliminator bout that may or may not come off on September 13 Oscar De La Hoya-Shane Mosley undercard.
Future: A title shot. Eventually.

64 CORY SPINKS
IBF Welterweight Titleholder 31-2 (11)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Don't let the name fool you—quick-fisted boxer came back from controversial loss to Michele Piccirillo (L 12) to fight to close win over Rafael Pineda (Tech. Win 7) then score excellent win over Piccirillo (W 12) in Italy to win the title.
Future: Likely next opponent undefeated Danish southpaw Thomas Damgaard. "The Next Generation" is also a possible target of junior welter champ Kostya Tszyu.

65 ANGEL MANFREDY
Lightweight 42-6-1 (31) with 1 no-contest

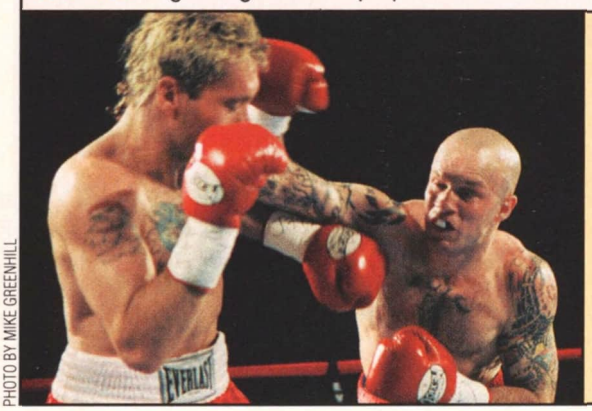


PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Last Year's Ranking: 66
Status Report: Slowly working his way toward yet another title shot with wins over Moises Pedroza (KO 7) and John Bailey (KO 7). May never get over the hump to the very top level, but retains excellent skills and a true fighter's heart.
Future: By the time you read this, will have fought a mid-level opponent on ESPN2.

Manfredy scores an easy win over journeyman Bailey

66 DAVID TUA
Heavyweight 42-3-1 (37)

Last Year's Ranking: 83
Status Report: Was on a roll with quick wins over Michael Moorer (KO 1) and Russell Chasteen (KO 2), when he struggled against surprisingly capable Hasim Rahman in their rematch (D 12). Even after all these years, still possesses the best chin and the best left hook in the division.
Future: August match in South Africa underneath Corrie Sanders' homecoming, then a meeting with Sanders late in the year.

67 HASIM RAHMAN
Heavyweight 35-4-1 (29)

Last Year's Ranking: 99
Status Report: After consecutive losses to Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield, was thought to be damaged goods, but rebounded nicely against David Tua (D 12) in a fight most observers thought he deserved. Proved himself still one of the division's better boxer-punchers, if not one of its best-conditioned fighters.
Future: For whatever it's worth, is Lewis' mandatory challenger. A rubber match is unlikely, though, so options from Joe Mesi to Chris Byrd are under consideration.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Rahman and Tua trade powershots

68 NOEL ARAMBULET
WBA Minimumweight Titleholder 19-2-1 (10)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Consecutive majority decision wins over Keitaro Hoshino, first to win the WBA 105-pound belt for a second time, then in first defense five months later, allowed Venezuelan to break back into top 100. Both wins over Hoshino came in Japan, suggesting the decisions were deserved.
Future: Tough title defense against mandatory challenger, veteran Chana Porpaoin.

69 JEAN-MARC MORMECK
WBA Cruiserweight Titleholder 29-2 (21)

Last Year's Ranking: 93
Status Report: Has defended belt twice since dethroning Virgil Hill, stopping the credible duo of Dale Brown (KO 8) and Alexander Gurov (KO 8). A hungry, hard, deliberate puncher with power in both hands.
Future: Probable ho-hum defense against Luis Pineda, but wouldn't shootout with Wayne "Big Truck" Braithwaite be more fun?

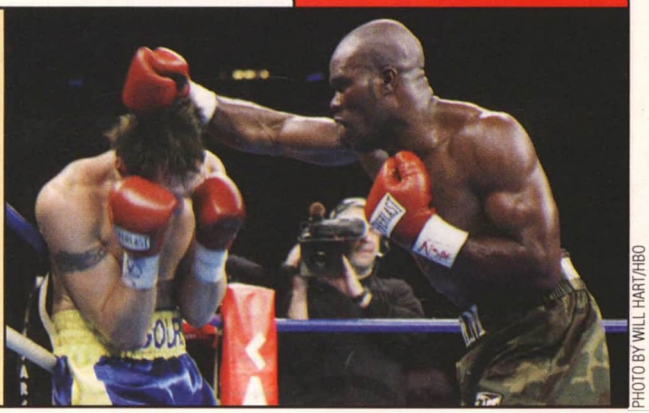


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Mormeck overpowers challenger Gurov

70 PHILLIP NDOU
Junior Lightweight 30-1 (29)

Last Year's Ranking: 78
Status Report: Fast-rising boxer-puncher had a solid year, stopping Vicente Burgo (KO 3), Alex Moon (KO 1), and Yoni Vargas (KO 4). Contributes to increasingly interesting 130-pound division.
Future: Continued climb toward title shot, hopefully within the next 12 months. A little U.S. TV exposure first wouldn't hurt.

71 LUIS PEREZ
IBF Junior Bantamweight Titleholder 21-1 (14)

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Dethroned beltholder Felix Machado in January slugfest that left both fighters bruised, swollen, and bleeding. A late replacement and a considerable underdog, Perez' strength and volume punching wore down Machado in one of the best fights of the year.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time and first two contender slots are vacant. A rematch with Machado, who's rated third by the IBF, would be fine with us.

Perez jolts Machado with a pinpoint right

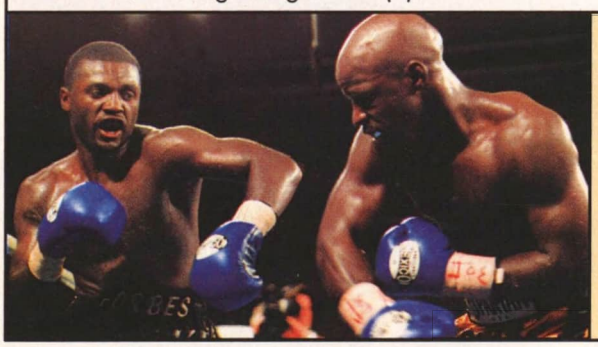
72 MARTIN CASTILLO
Junior Bantamweight 23-1 (14)

Last Year's Ranking: 72
Status Report: Since controversial loss to Felix Machado in 2002, has rebounded with wins over Keyri Wong (KO 8) and Valerio Sanchez (W 8)—not big names, admittedly. Attractive fight with WBA beltholder Alexander Munoz fell through due to injury to titlist.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time, but on the basis of alphabet group ratings, has a reasonable chance of getting a shot at one of the belts soon.

73 OKTAY URKAL
Junior Welterweight 33-1 (10)

Last Year's Ranking: 76
Status Report: After staying with Kostya Tszyu en route to losing on points in 2001, returned to friendlier confines and has won five straight over decent European competition. Most recent win over Ricky Hatton victim Eamonn Magee (W 12).
Future: In the talent-packed 140-pound division, has a long wait for another shot at the title. Is, however, ranked in top four by all major sanctioning bodies.

74 STEVE FORBES
Junior Lightweight 23-1 (6)



Last Year's Ranking: 75
Status Report: Lost IBF title on scales, but went on to edge challenger David Santos (W 12), then handled Ronnie Longakit (KO 5) and Silverio Ley (W 10) in lightweight bouts to salvage year. No puncher, but a quick-fisted boxer you could mistake for a poor man's Steve Johnston.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time, but we'd like to see him take a meaningful fight at 130—a weight he insists he can still make.

Forbes fires a left at John Brown

75 YODSANAN NANTHACHAI
WBA Super Featherweight Titleholder 39-2-1 (32)

Last Year's Ranking: 77
Status Report: Since beating Lavka Sim for the "title" (Acelino Freitas is the "super" champion), has defended just once, against Lamont Pearson (KO 9). Also stopped Tirso Albia (KO 2) in non-title bout. Has never fought outside of Thailand.
Future: Would be a big underdog against Freitas or Joel Casamayor (the WBA mandatory), which is why he'll probably stay at home and keep fighting safer opposition.

76 FELIX MACHADO
Junior Bantamweight 22-4-1 (11)

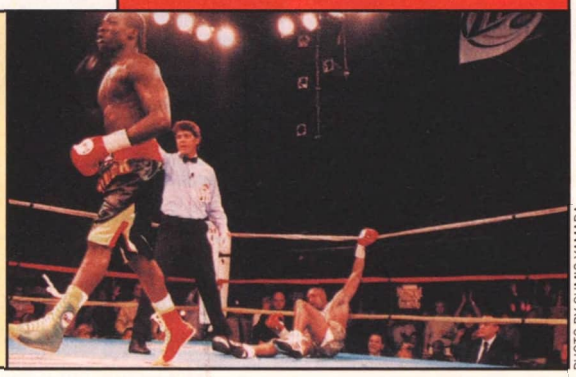
Last Year's Ranking: 73
Status Report: At 30, may already be slowing down. In lone fight since last year's controversial win over Martin Castillo, was upset and dethroned by rough Luis Perez (L 12) in a brutal, foul-filled slugfest. Still, a tricky, resourceful veteran who doesn't always look like he knows what he's doing, but does anyway.
Future: A rematch with Perez isn't out of the question. Needs to get busy, one way or the other.

77 SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSAK
WBC Super Featherweight Titleholder 40-1 (23)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Since blowing out Kengo Nagashima (KO 2) to win the vacant WBC title, has defended against Yongsoo Choi (W 12) and also had two non-title wins. Busy, hard-punching Thai hasn't lost in six years, but overall, quality of opposition is lacking.
Future: Making American debut in tough August defense against top-rated Jesus Chavez.

78 WAYNE BRAITHWAITE
WBC Cruiserweight Titleholder 19-0 (16)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Hard-slugging Guyanese pulverized awkward Vincenzo Cantatore (KO 10) to claim vacant title and defended against talented but soft-chinned Ravea Springs (KO 4). Not especially skilled, but heavy hands pose big threat.
Future: By the time you read this, will already have faced Cantatore again in Italy in risky and unwarranted WBC-mandated rematch.



"Big Truck" Braithwaite rolls over Springs

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

79 RICKY HATTON
Junior Welterweight 32-0 (24)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Stepped up level of competition somewhat with solid thrashing of former titlist Vince Phillips (W 12) after also beating Joe Hutchinson (KO 4), Stephen Smith (W Disq. 2), and Eamonn Magee (W 12). Swarming, left-hooking attack makes for exciting fights.
Future: All Brit showdown with Naseem Hamed wannabe Junior Witter likely.

Hatton gives Phillips the hook

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

80 DANIEL SANTOS
Junior Middleweight 27-2-1 (20) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Efficient boxer-puncher outboxed untested Takaloo (W 12) and Fulgencio Zuniga (W 12) to break into top 100. Not the most exciting junior middleweight out there, and possibly a bit chinny, but he carries a respectable punch, and what he does works for him.
Future: Won't go anywhere near the division's top dogs. And with good reason.

81 EDGAR CARDENAS
IBF Mini Flyweight Titleholder 30-10-2 (16)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Was trailing on all cards against defending titlist Miguel Barrera when he stopped Barrera and, presumably, ended his career in the 10th round. Had won four in a row going in, but against mediocre opposition, such as trialhorse Paulino Villalobos (W 8).
Future: Really just a journeyman who landed a career-altering punch, so a brief title reign looks likely.

82 MARKUS BEYER
WBC Super Middleweight Titleholder 27-1 (11)

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Has fought exclusively in Europe against mostly mediocre competition and surprised many with split decision win over more worldly Eric Lucas in Germany for title. Legitimacy of scoring doubted by many, who suspected national bias was at play.
Future: Only way to prove true superiority over Lucas is to rematch with him, and, surprisingly, the WBC has done the logical thing and made Lucas the mandatory.

Beyer lands a right en route to controversial win over Lucas

83 ERIC LUCAS
Super Middleweight 36-5-3 (13)

Last Year's Ranking: 97
Status Report: Canadian was basking in praise of unexpectedly cerebral win over Omar Sheika (W 12) when Markus Beyer beat him to claim title (L 12). Bout took place in Germany, and in eyes of many, the wrong guy got the decision.
Future: A tune-up followed by a rematch with Beyer in Germany.

84 JERMAIN TAYLOR
Middleweight 16-0 (12)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Hard-hitting boxer-puncher improved dramatically after ho-hum start to pro career, graduating from dull win over Sam Hill (W 10) to impressive stoppages of Lionel Ortiz (KO 2), Marcos Primera (KO 5), and Nicolas Cervera (KO 4). Hottest American prospect in the business.
Future: August date on *Friday Night Fights* against another mid-level guy before shot at top-10 opponent by end of year.

85 KASSIM OUMA
Junior Middleweight 17-1-1 (11) with 1 no-contest

PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Pushed hard in recent win over tough Angel Hernandez (W 12) after having knockout win over Darrell Woods changed to no-contest (postfight urine test revealed presence of marijuana). Hard-punching, physically strong 154-pounder has been matched hard and passed every test.
Future: Title elimination bout for shot at beltholder Winky Wright could be next. High output style gives him a chance at outpointing more economical Wright.

Ouma pounds outclassed Woods

86 DIOBELYS HURTADO
Junior Welterweight 35-3-1 (23)

Last Year's Ranking: 50
Status Report: Momentum gained with win over Randall Bailey short-lived, as former Cuban amateur standout was pancaked by Vivian Harris (KO by 2). All three career losses by knockout (others were to Kostya Tszyu and Pernell Whitaker), suggesting chin is not his strongest asset.
Future: Nothing scheduled as we went to press, but there is no shortage of fights at 140.

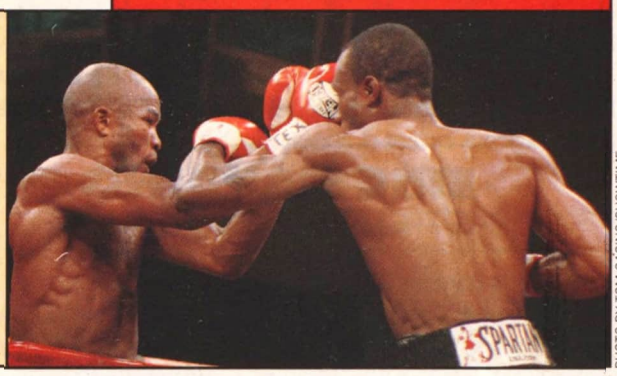


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Hurtado absorbs a hard hook from Harris

87 CHANA PORPAOIN
Strawweight 49-2-2 (17)

Last Year's Ranking: 88
Status Report: Still in comeback mode after losing title to Yutaka Niida in 2001. Won two more decisions in the past year over nondescript competition. Is the mandatory challenger for WBA titlist Noel Arambulet, so not taking any chances.
Future: Title shot against Arambulet. Considering Thailander is now 37, retirement may beckon if unsuccessful against younger Venezuelan.

88 ARTUR GRIGORIAN
Lightweight 36-0 (22)

Last Year's Ranking: 85
Status Report: Germany-based Uzbeki fought twice in last year, beating Stefano Zoff (W 12) and Mat Zegan (W 12), both in Germany. Win over anonymous Zegan was surprisingly close. Southpaw unknown to all but the hardest of hardcore American fans, as he's never fought outside Europe and never on American television.
Future: Probably can remain undefeated against WBO challengers for years if he chooses that route over a long-overdue test against a top lightweight.

89 THOMAS DAMGAARD
Welterweight 32-0 (25)

Last Year's Ranking: 91
Status Report: Two more wins over the last year—against Oscar Munoz (KO 3) and Presente Brido (W 8)—keep Dane in the top 100. Is rated in the top three by all three alphabet groups, but has yet to get title shot. You can make a case against that shot coming, given the quality of opposition.
Future: Title shot should arrive before this time next year, most likely against Cory Spinks.

90 SALIM MEDJKOUNE
WBA Super Bantamweight Titleholder 41-3-1 (21)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Southpaw Frenchman went all the way to Japan to dethrone Osamu Sato (W 12), and defended six months later against Vincenzo Gigliotti (W 12). Has fought throughout Europe, but primarily in France.
Future: By the time you read this, will have defended against Mahyar Monshipour in Poitiers, France.

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Medjkoune takes the title from Sato in Tokyo

91 GLENCOFFE JOHNSON
Light Heavyweight 39-9-1 (27)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Hard-luck Floridian finally got a break with deserved victory over top-rated Eric Harding (W 12) after being jobbed against Daniel Judah (D 10) and Julio Gonzalez (L 10). Isn't great at anything, but he's a competent, hard-working pro.
Future: If he plays it right, maybe a round-trip ticket to Germany.

92 ERIC HARDING
Light Heavyweight 21-3-1 (7)

Last Year's Ranking: 25
Status Report: Consecutive losses, to Antonio Tarver (KO by 5) and Glencoffe Johnson (L 12), result in major demotion. Was doing well against Tarver before running into big punch, and was simply outworked by Johnson.
Future: Back to the drawing board.

93 MIKE TYSON
Heavyweight 50-4 (44) with 2 no-contests

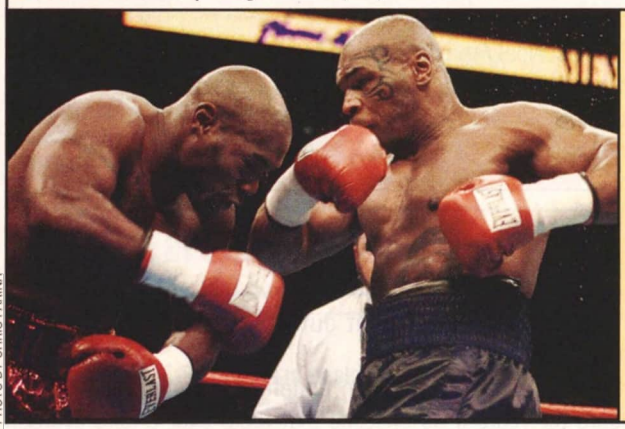


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Rebounded from beatdown by Lennox Lewis with a predictable stoppage of soft-chinned Cliff Etienne (KO 1). Followed that by, also predictably, pulling out of co-feature to Lewis' June 21 Los Angeles title defense. Only fight since Etienne bout came against three civilians in a hotel lobby.
Future: Has stated he has no interest in a return bout with Lewis, and, at 37, his ability to garner multimillion-dollar paydays is fading as rapidly as are his skills. Still, a Roy Jones bout would be utterly enormous.

Tyson makes quick work of Etienne

94 OMAR WEIS
Junior Welterweight 36-4-3 (16)

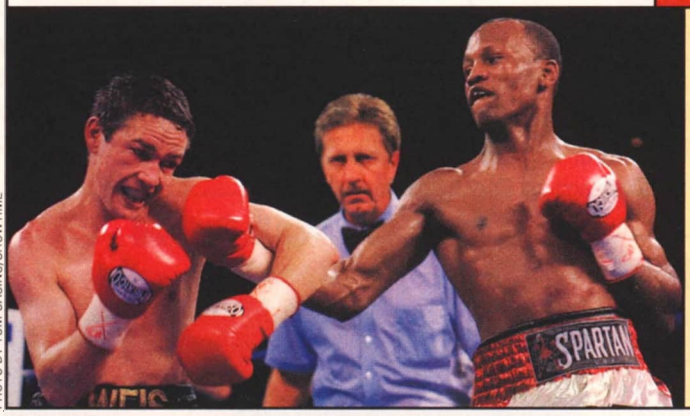


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Last Year's Ranking: 100
Status Report: In highest profile fight of his career, dropped a competitive but clear decision to former beltholder Zab Judah (L 10), but rebounded nicely with win over the ubiquitous Emanuel Augustus (W 10). Lack of pop hurting him, but in almost any other division, he'd be a top-five guy.
Future: Skills and heart should keep him in the thick of things at 140 for a good long while.

Weis hangs tough against the more talented Judah

95 MEHDI SAHNOUNE
WBA Light Heavyweight Titleholder 24-0 (21)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Wholly unqualified for the title shot he received against veteran Bruno Girard, but made the most of it, stopping Girard in the seventh round. Not another recognizable name on his record, but title win meaningful—Girard's a tough guy.
Future: Mandatory will come against winner of July's Lou Del Valle-Manny Siaca fight, and should tell us if Girard win was a fluke.

96 WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
Heavyweight 40-2 (37)

Last Year's Ranking: 52
Status Report: With solid wins over Ray Mercer (KO 6) and towering Jameel McCline (KO 10), was streaking toward title shot when shockingly upended by journeyman Corrie Sanders (KO by 2) in Germany in March. Mechanically a very skilled, talented heavyweight, but with serious questions now about his jaw.
Future: Promoter Universum looking for decent name in August 30 comeback bout, but if Klitschko is to restore credibility, he'll eventually need a rematch with Sanders.

97 CARLOS HERNANDEZ
IBF Junior Lightweight Titleholder 39-3-1 (24)

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Veteran boxer-puncher finally claimed title with win over David Santos (Tech. Win 8) when a headbutt produced a gash that led to the fight's stoppage. Learned from tough decision losses to Genaro Hernandez (way back in 1997) and Floyd Mayweather (in 2001) and is now peaking at age 32.
Future: Potentially an interesting defense against mandatory challenger and former titlist Steve Forbes.

Hernandez rips Santos with a jab

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

98 ROBERT ALLEN
Middleweight 35-4 (26) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: not rated
Status Report: Hard-hitting southpaw on a fine run, with good wins over Tito Mendoza (Tech. Win 6), Kevin Hall (KO 1), and Jesse Aquino (KO 8). Finally living down horrid performance he gave in second match with Bernard Hopkins.
Future: Is Hopkins' IBF mandatory, but don't expect hard-to-sell third match anytime soon. Will probably play it safe until mandatory is enforced.

99 JESSE JAMES LEIJA
Junior Welterweight 44-6-2 (18) with 1 no-contest

Last Year's Ranking: 61
Status Report: At age 36, can no longer compete against the very best for more than a handful of rounds, as evidenced most recently when he lost to Kostya Tszyu (KO by 6) after starting well. Still sharp and skilled enough to dominate most B-level competition, as he did Adan Casillas (KO 4) in first fight after loss to Tszyu.
Future: Nothing scheduled at press time, but still a fan favorite whom HBO and Showtime are glad to use as a dangerous opponent.

100 BYRON MITCHELL
Super Middleweight 25-3-1 (18)

Last Year's Ranking: 74
Status Report: Consecutive losses to Sven Ottke (L 12) and Joe Calzaghe (KO by 2), the division's best fighters, result in demotion for "Slama From 'Bama." Both losses were competitive, however, and in a sense improved his marketability. Still one of the better 168-pounders out there.
Future: Desperately needs a win over a top guy to remain in the title picture.

Mitchell drills Julio Cesar Green in a thriller

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

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Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler—Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be ... But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again—How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache.

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough *Now?* Plus: Carbajal-Gonzalez preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Freddie Pendleton.

April 1994: Michael Carbajal—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

June 1995: (92-Page Special): Foreman Frowns Upon The Age Gap: "I Don't Think Tyson Should Fight Anyone But Me." Plus: Least deserving heavyweight challengers, Carlos Monzon, Kostya Tszyu.

July 1995: Pernell Whitaker: THE RING Makes "Pound-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, Hector Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... Robinson-Burley.

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Dec. 1995: Mike Tyson (vs. Peter McNeeley): The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Morrison-Lewis preview, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, 10 best chins.

Jan. 1996: King Bruno! A Hero Always ... A Winner At Last. Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, Oscar De La Hoya, Chris Eubank, Eddie Perkins, who's hot/who's not.

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May 1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker: Can "Sweet Pea" Stop Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: Fitzsimmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, Don King, Zaragoza-McCullough.

June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

July 1997: Leonard: There Wasn't Even A Ray Of Hope. Plus: Felix Trinidad, David Reid, Willie deWit & Shawn O'Sullivan, THE RING's 75th anniversary, Moore-Durelle I.

Oct. 1997: Bang! Naseem Hamed Takes Aim At America. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Phillips-Tszyu, Saman Sorjaturong, Bobby Dykes.

Nov. 1997: Is Mike Tyson Finished? Plus: Ike Ibeabuchi, De La Hoya-Camacho preview, Frankie Conley, Hall of Fame, gloves,

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Jan. 1998: Give This Man His Due! If You Can't Respect Oscar ... You Can't Respect Anyone! Plus: Sanchez-Mayweather, Morales-Zaragoza, Lucia Rijker, Marvin Johnson, characters.

Feb. 1998: Welter-Skelter! The Hottest Division In Boxing. Plus: Lewis-Golota, Olympic update, Art Shires, boxing I.Q.

March 1998 (92-Page Special): Into The Millennium With The Real Deal: THE RING's Timeline For Evander Holyfield. Plus: Hernandez-Hernandez, Briggs-Foreman, 10 champs recall "The Day I Won The Title," Johnny Thompson.

April 1998: Evander Holyfield: THE RING's Fighter Of The Year (Again!). Plus: Yory Boy Campas, Mullings-Norris, Pinkey Mitchell, Holyfield Q & A, Hamed-Kelley, Oscar De La Hoya.

June 1998 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Tyson-King, David Reid, Bernard Hopkins, Ken Norton.

July 1998: Holyfield ... Tapia ... Hamed ... Jones ... Trinidad ... De La Hoya: Who Will Be The First To Fall? Plus: Magic Johnson, Chavez-Gonzalez & Lopez-Alvarez, underappreciated boxers.

Aug. 1998: Lennox Lewis: No Holyfield, No Glory. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Pat & Mike McMurtry, Chris Byrd, unbreakable records, contenders & pretenders.

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Feb. 1999: 1999! It's Gonna Be A Great Year For Boxing. Plus: Mike Tyson, Foreman-Holmes, David Reid, Eric Morel, Richie Mitchell, quitters.

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April 1999 (92-Page Special): Fighter Of The Year: Floyd Mayweather Jr.: "He's So Good, It's Scary!" Plus: Fernando Vargas, James Page, Luisito Espinosa, Robinson-Gatti II, Archie Moore, Carlos Oritz, 1998 diary.

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Jan. 2000: What Does Trinidad's Victory Over Oscar Mean? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Paul Spadafora, Ralph Dupas, boxing media.

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May 2000: Lennox Lewis Will Quit ... Or Get Knocked Out, By Michael Grant. Plus: Roy Jones, Quartey-Vargas preview, Garth Panter, best chins, boxing movies.

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Aug. 2000: Hamed! And The Men Who Want To Kick His Naz! Plus: David Reid, James Prince, Anthony Fletcher, Micky Ward, final beatings, white hopes.

Sept. 2000: A New Look At Lennox Lewis: Is He An All-Time Great? Plus: Winky Wright, Michael Moorer, De La Hoya & Vargas, Eddie McGoorty.

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Dec. 2000: The Hell With Tyson—Tua Is The Man Who Could Beat Lewis. Plus: Mike Tyson, Felix Trinidad, Wladimir Klitschko, Trilla in Manila, U.S. vs. World, Toxey Hall.

Jan. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Trinidad's Destiny: Jones Is On His Mind ... But Vargas Is In His Face! Plus: Naseem Hamed, Tszyu-Judah, Evander Holyfield, Willie Bean, 20 greatest middleweights.

Feb. 2001: It's Not Over For Oscar: THE RING's Five-Step Recovery Plan. Plus: Bob Arum, Dingaan Thobela, Hernandez brothers, U.S. Olympic team, future pound-for-pounders.

March 2001 (108-Page Extra): Tyson! Forget About Retirement ... A Title Shot Awaits! Plus: Ayala-Tapia II, Audley Harrison, Chris Byrd, Kirk Johnson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Boone Kirkman, 12 most exciting rounds.

April 2001: A New Beginning ... A New Middle: Felix Trinidad Is Ready To Conquer Another Division! Plus: Shane Mosley, Lennox Lewis, Paul Andrews, boxing business.

May 2001 (108-Page Extra): Felix Trinidad—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Barrera-Hamed preview, Bernard Hopkins, Joey Archer.

June 2001: Pretty Boy Floyd: Superstar Or Superbrat? Plus: Lewis vs. greats, 2000 Olympians, Henry Hall, rematches we'd like to see.

July 2001 (108-Page Extra): The State Of The Game. Plus: Zab Judah, John Ruiz, Andrew Lewis, Mark Johnson, British boxing.

Aug. 2001: Rocking The World! What Rahman's Victory Means To Boxing. Plus: Barrera-Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Mount Whitaker, *Friday Night Fights.*

Sept. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Exclusive RING Interview—Hasim Rahman: "Nobody's Taking My Titles!" Plus: 20 all-time greatest lightweights, Pat Valentino, Hopkins & King, Jones & Arum.

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March 2002 (108-Page Extra): Is Tyson Ready To Regain The Title? Plus: Kostya Tszyu, Floyd Mayweather, Bernard Hopkins, Eddie Futch, fitness, ahead for 2002.

May 2002 (108-Page Extra): Bernard Hopkins—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Holyfield-Ruiz III, 2000 Olympians, Eric Harding, "Silent" Hairston.

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July 2002 (108-Page Extra): Exclusive Preview: The Oscar-Fernando Hatefest. Plus: Hopkins & Monzon, Francisco Bojado, Buddy McGirt, Lionel Rose, State of the Game.

Aug. 2002: Lewis vs. Tyson: Who Will Win ... And What Happens Next. Plus: Michael Moorer, Jeff Fenech, Charley Parham, Rafael & Juan Manuel Marquez.

Sept. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Vernon Forrest—Next Step In The Master Plan: End Mosley's Career. Plus: Sugar Ray Leonard, Roberto Duran, Ricardo Mayorga, 20 greatest lightweights.

Oct. 2002: Tito' Back ... And He's "Going To Make Hopkins Pay!" Plus: Ward-Gatti, Bouie Fisher, controversial scoring, ruining prospects.

Nov. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Monster Mashed! Can A New Tyson Emerge From The Rubble? Plus: THE RING 100, Evander Holyfield, Don King, Billy Joiner, junior welters.

Dec. 2002: Ward & Gatti Look To Hit Another Grand Slam! Plus: Forrest-Mosley II, Barrera-Morales II, Manny Pacquiao, Tim Austin, Nino Benvenuti, Mark Taffet.

Jan. 2003 (108-Page Extra): The Golden Boy Proves His Manhood: Is Oscar De La Hoya' Prime Just Beginning? Plus: Michael Grant, David Tua, previews of Morales-Ayala and Ward-Gatti II, overrated/underrated.

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March 2003 (108-Page Extra): Hamed ... Morales ... Tapia: Barrera Has Punched His Ticket To The Hall Of Fame. Also: Joe Mesi, Ricardo Lopez, Pipino Cuevas, alphabet tales, what's ahead for '03.

April 2003: Gatti Has His Ducks In A Row: A New Woman And A New Trainer Put The "Art" Back In Arturo. Also: Barrera-Morales, Roy Jones, Phillip Ndou & Silence Mabuza, Laila Ali, Gorilla Jones,

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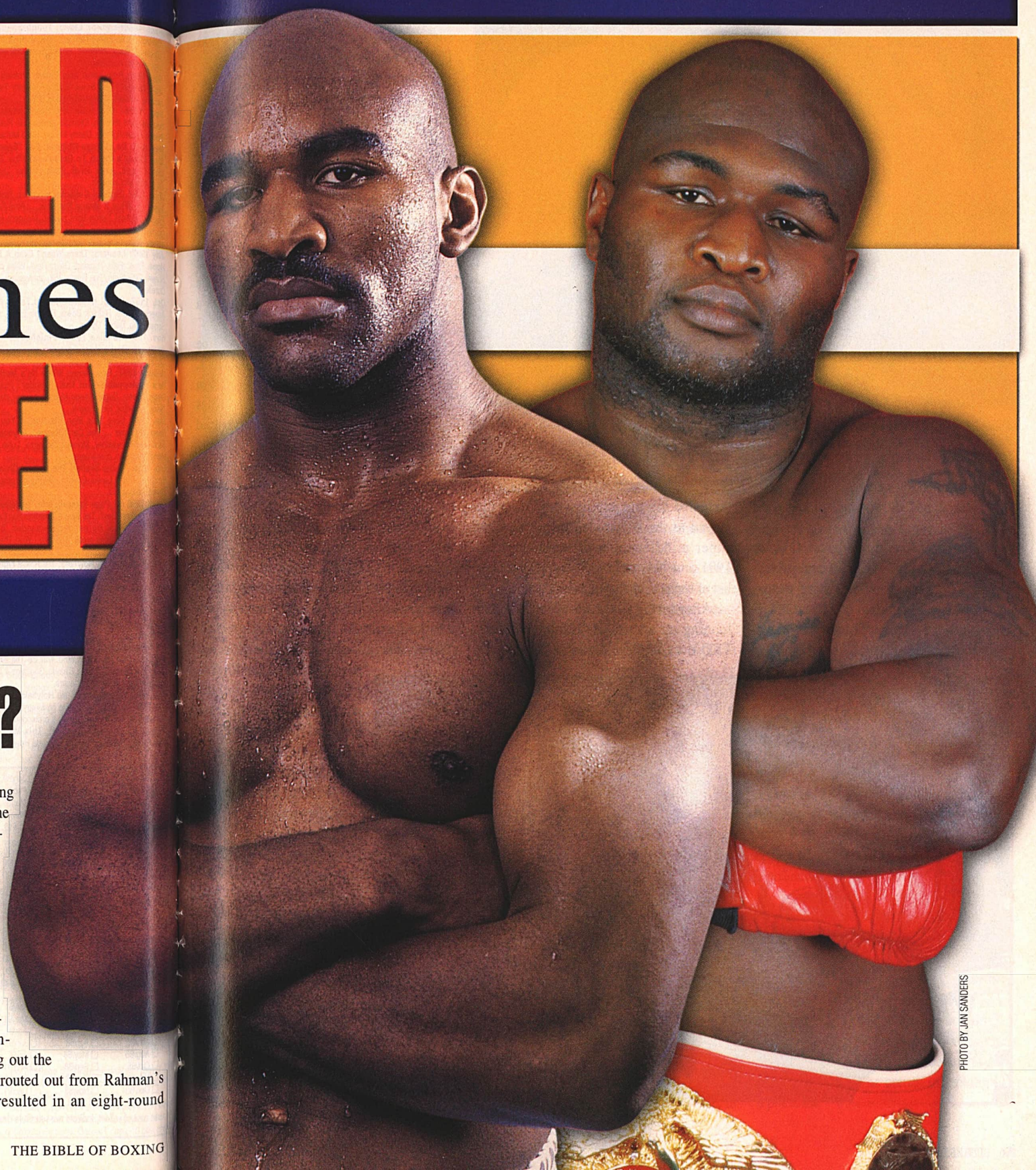

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Fine Cuisine Or Road Kill?

By Mike Houser

Given the traditional performances of both men, the October 4 heavyweight clash between Evander Holyfield and IBF cruiserweight king James Toney could very well be like giving boxing fans their first dish of caviar: They will either leave impressed and with a good taste in their mouths, or they'll be ready to gag.

But ravenous followers of the Sweet Science are naturally imbued with strong stomachs and an even heartier appetite for action. They will no doubt be willing to take their chances and pull out their wallets for the Showtime pay-per-view event featuring former undisputed heavyweight champion Holyfield and Toney, who is currently number one in THE RING's 190-pound ratings.

Holyfield, who lays claim to having a heavyweight belt from at least one of the alphabet sanctioning bodies strapped around his waist on four occasions, enters the fight with a mark of 38-6-2 (25), and is coming off a frustrating 12-round defeat to IBF bauble-holder Chris Byrd. Holyfield, who fought with an injured shoulder and was unable to catch the speedy southpaw, underwent surgery after the fight.

In addition to his ongoing battle with Father Time and boxing pundits and fans who keep begging him to retire, the stubborn Holyfield is hoping to perform at least as well as he did against Hasim Rahman in June 2002. Even though a butt-induced hematoma resembling something out the movie *Alien* sprouted out from Rahman's forehead and resulted in an eight-round

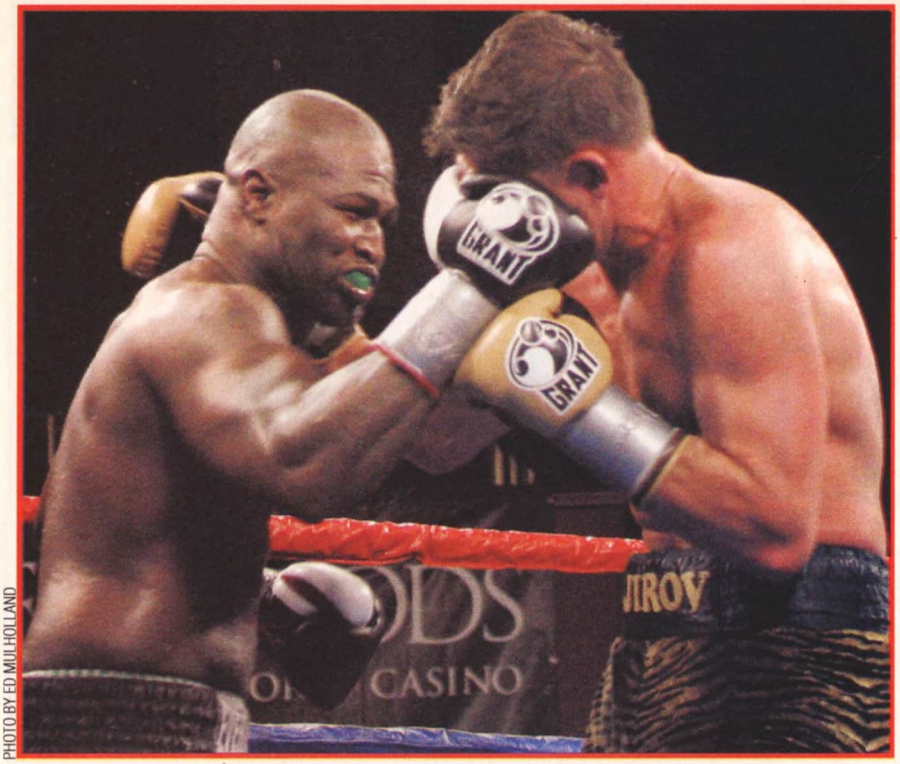


PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

Toney and Holyfield are coming off totally different kinds of performances. While Toney had his best showing in years in winning the IBF cruiser belt against previously undefeated Vassiliy Jirov (above), Holyfield looked old and slow while losing a 12-round decision to Chris Byrd (below).

technical decision in favor of Holyfield, "The Real Deal" showed he still had some fight left in him.

No stranger to criticism himself, Toney brings a record of 66-4-2 (42), and is coming off perhaps the most exciting victory of his career: a 12-round unanimous decision on April 26 over former IBF titlist Vassiliy Jirov, in what may be a candidate for Fight of the Year. Toney has recently rekindled the fire and desire he once displayed as the IBF middleweight and IBF super middleweight monarch between 1991 and '94, when he was on the short list of top pound-for-pound fighters.

After taking his share of heat for ballooning up as high as 226 pounds for a TKO over Wesley Martin in 2001, Toney has been making his critics eat their words, finding the willpower to push himself away from the dinner table and back into the good graces of the boxing public and into a seven-figure payday against Holyfield.

Veteran trainer Jesse Reid counts himself as one of those who is looking forward to sampling the Holyfield-Toney treat.

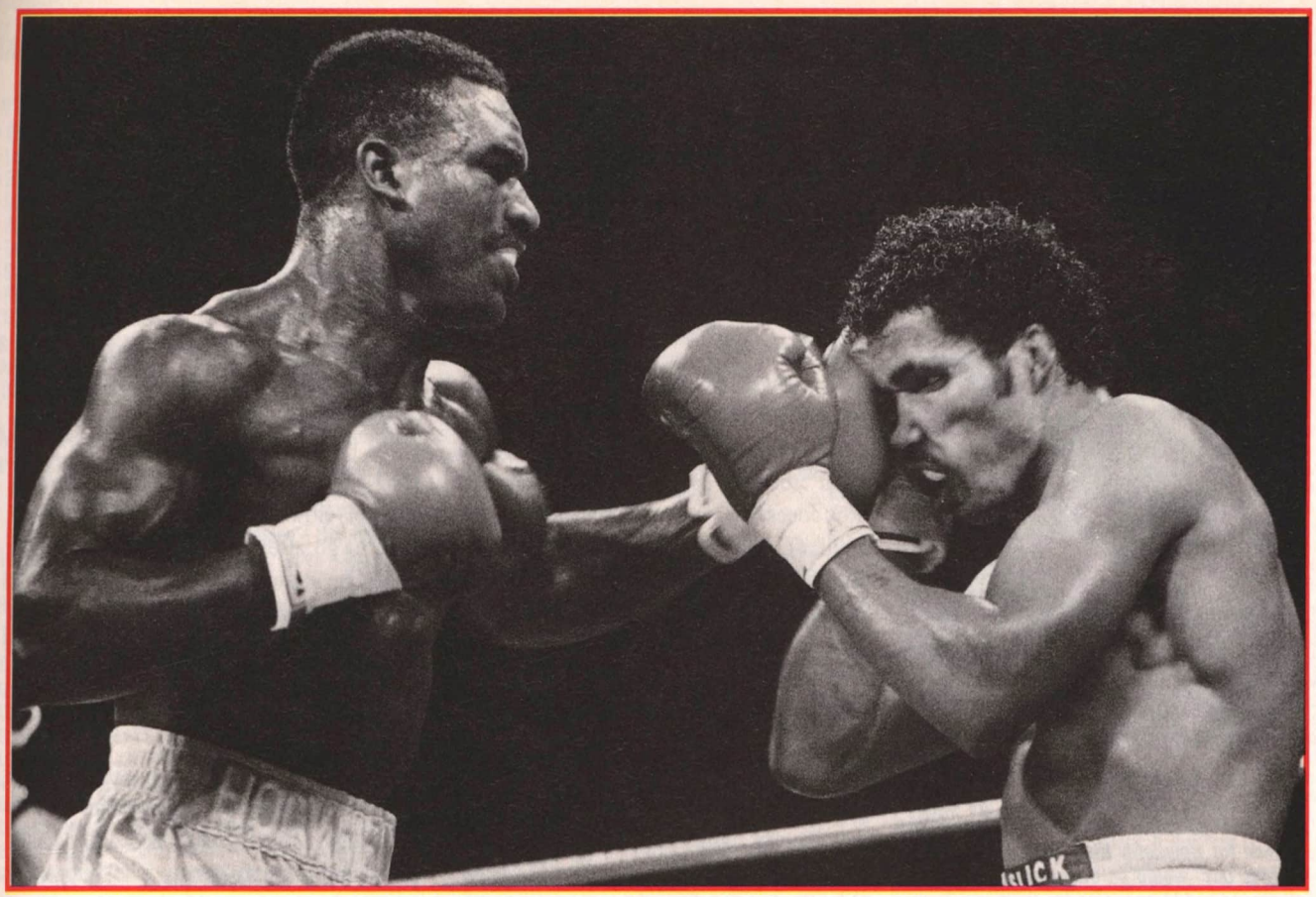
"I think it's a great fight," said Reid, who currently trains Paul Spadafora. "The speed of Toney is an advantage. Toney's ring generalship helped him with Jirov. He will use that against Holyfield. I think he'll open some cuts on Holyfield. The timing is tough for Holyfield. He's at the end of his career. If the fight happened when he was on top of his career, it would've been a great, great fight."

In a perfect world, Holyfield would be meeting the resurgent Toney at 190 pounds, where Holyfield dominated the division between 1986 and '89, unifying the titles and twice beating Dwight Muhammad Qawi. Before making his mark as a heavyweight, Holyfield practically stamped his picture in the boxing dictionary next to the words "cruiserweight champion."

Although Holyfield is naturally bigger than Toney, the size disparity isn't really all that great. Holyfield began his career at light heavyweight, which means his weight advantage actually boils down to only about 15 pounds over natural middleweight Toney. Factor in Toney's five-year age advantage over the 40-year-old Holyfield, and size may not necessarily be the most prominent issue. What may really matter most is how the styles match up.

"What we'll actually see is these two fighters right in front of each other," said Al Bernstein, who will be enjoying the contest from ringside as Showtime's boxing analyst. "There won't be a lot of movement from either fighter. It will be similar to the Toney-Jirov fight."

If the encounter turns out anything like Toney-Jirov, it would certainly be the *piece de resistance* on a year that will have already seen such other action fights as Arturo



In an ironic twist, Holyfield once owned the IBF cruiserweight belt that now belongs to Toney. "The Real Deal" won it in way back in May 1987 when he knocked out Rickey Parkey in the third round (pictured). Eleven months later, Holyfield unified the cruiser crown, then left the division.

Gatti-Micky Ward III, Spadafora-Leonard Dorin, Lennox Lewis-Vitali Klitschko, two encounters between Ricardo Mayorga and Vernon Forrest, and Oscar De La Hoya-Shane Mosley II. Can boxing connoisseurs indeed get that lucky?

Don't count on it. In spite of seemingly finding the recipe for success, Toney has indicated he may find his way back to the refrigerator and come into the fight weighing near 220 pounds. At 190 pounds, Toney is not a body beautiful. At 220 pounds, he may need to enter the fight wearing a sports bra.

"That's absurd," Bernstein said about Toney possibly packing on 30 pounds. "He needs to train and come in exactly like he did against Jirov."

Suddenly the fight is as appetizing as steaming bowl of cat food. Or, worse yet, Holyfield-Ruiz IV.

"What you have is an older man fighting a man with an eating problem," Reid said. "If Toney takes it seriously, he'll be ready for Holyfield. If he doesn't, shame on him. It's a fight he can win. This is a fight you want late in your career."

Nobody but Toney knows for sure if he's serious about sabotaging an otherwise interesting fight. There are no conceivable advantages in the weight gain.

"It's a disadvantage for him to fight at 220," said Thell Torrance, who was in Jirov's corner when he fought Toney and trained former WBC light heavyweight titlist Montell Griffin, the only boxer to twice defeat Toney. "He won't be able to move the way he wants. He won't be as quick as he needs to be. He needs to be a few pounds heavier than when where he fought Jirov. The weight won't make him hit any harder. He's got to be sharp and quick."

Speed, precision, and mobility are precisely what Toney needs in order to defeat Holyfield. Instead of coming in like "Two Ton" Toney, he needs to fight like a bird—Chris Byrd, who used solid defense and great speed mixed with some good movement to take advantage of a one-armed Holyfield and reach his perch atop the IBF kingdom.

If Toney comes in heavy, the fight will be utterly predictable. Toney will attempt to counter, parking himself along the ropes where he can roll with and slip Holyfield's shots, which are becoming easier and easier to see. Both fighters possess excellent chins, so the chance for a knockout by either fighter is low, and unless Toney can do more than throw weighted-down counters and be cute, the fight will turn into a one-way ticket to acid reflux.

But a good fight is a two-way street, and Holyfield has his own questions to answer. The most obvious one being, does he still have anything to offer?

"He has the skill, and if he has the reflexes, he can push Toney around," Torrence said. "He's smart and can throw big bombs, particularly the right. Holyfield has been so successful because of his basic skills. He's a small heavyweight, but he has such good fundamentals that he's always able to compete with the bigger guys. If he has enough left, he'll outwork Toney."

One thing Bernstein, Reid, and Torrence agree on is that Holyfield needs to take it to Toney's body, which would be an easy target—especially if he comes in looking like a pot roast.

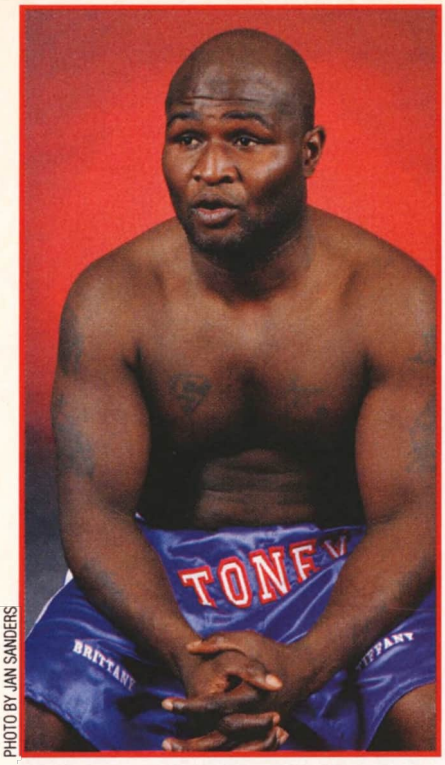


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

Toney, who has struggled with weight problems and an eating disorder throughout his career, suggested he might come in as heavy as 220 pounds for Holyfield. Most experts agree that "Lights Out" would be better served weighing closer to the 190 he scaled for Jirov.

"If Holyfield goes to the body, he'll do a lot better," Reid said. "Jirov made Toney stop throwing punches when he went to the body. Holyfield will make it a give-and-take fight. Holyfield has a heart as big as a lion."

Jirov had a hard time landing solid, clean shots to Toney's head, but he punished Toney's body throughout the fight, which contributed a lot to keeping Toney on the ropes and within punching range. The naturally bigger Holyfield carries more power and punches with more conviction than Jirov, and if his surgically repaired shoulder is healed and he enters the fight in top condition, Holyfield can make it a long night for Toney and keep himself in the heavyweight hunt.

Bernstein had several questions to add to the truckload of "ifs" surrounding this fight.

Said Bernstein: "Can Toney take Holyfield's power when he gets hit? Holyfield is by far the biggest puncher he's faced. At Holyfield's advanced age, can he deal with Toney's hand speed? And Toney's defense is similar to Chris Byrd's. Will it stymie Holyfield? Against Byrd, Holyfield wasn't brilliant."

Toney has never been stopped, which will increase the chances of the fight going the distance and force Holyfield to press the action if he wants results.

With neither boxer likely to get a shot at Lewis for the legitimate heavyweight championship, the non-title affair also raises the issue of motivation. Holyfield has obstinately maintained that he won't retire until he's once again the unified heavyweight champion. How does fighting Toney advance that cause?

Money should be the least of Holyfield's worries. He has made so much of it that he can use it for toilet paper. Still, "The Real Deal" recently backed out of a fight with Roy Jones (who was reportedly to earn $24-million), citing his $8.5-million payday and his differences with promoter Don King.

As for Toney, combined with his exciting win over Jirov, an impressive victory over Holyfield could put him in the running for Fighter of the Year honors and a huge payday for a rematch with Jones, who caught the mainstream's attention with his one-sided victory over John Ruiz.

"Toney can make a pocketful of money," Torrence said. "He won't lose anything by fighting Holyfield. If he loses, people will say it's because he fought a heavyweight. It's a no-lose situation. He can move back down and fight Vassiliy. It's a good fight for Toney."

Toney does appear to have less to lose than Holyfield, whose stock would plummet so badly with a defeat that he'd be out of the heavyweight picture completely. Take into account that he has won only two of his last seven fights, and it's plain to everyone with the exception of Holyfield that it would be time—still—to pack it in.

Standing 5'11", Toney isn't known for coming out with both guns blazing, so it wouldn't be likely he'd force the fight, which is usually customary for a shorter fighter when facing a taller opponent like the 6'2" Holyfield.

Holyfield, on the other hand, has made his reputation as a warrior by initiating exciting slugfests, such as his first fight with Qawi (W 15), his battle with Bert Cooper (KO 7), and in two of his three fights with Riddick Bowe (L 12, W 12). His willingness to go after George Foreman (W 12) and Mike Tyson (KO 11, W Disq. 3) by far overshadow his lackluster win over Vaughn Bean and his three somnolent bouts with Ruiz.

So there appear to be two possible outcomes.

If Holyfield can bring his best fight in years to the table and Toney comes in at no more than a well-conditioned 200 pounds, the pair will satisfy boxing fans' hunger for a good fight and possibly leave them clamoring for a second helping.

But if Toney comes in out of shape and Holyfield looks his age, the resulting disaster could turn some stomachs and leave those same boxing fans running for the restrooms. ■

Mike Houser is a boxing columnist for the Nevada Appeal.

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

If Holyfield is going to beat Toney, he's going to have to fight as well as he did against Hasim Rahman in June 2002. Even though it was a technical decision win for "Commander Vander," he looked sharp and was ahead on points when the fight was stopped due to a colossal lump on Rahman's head.

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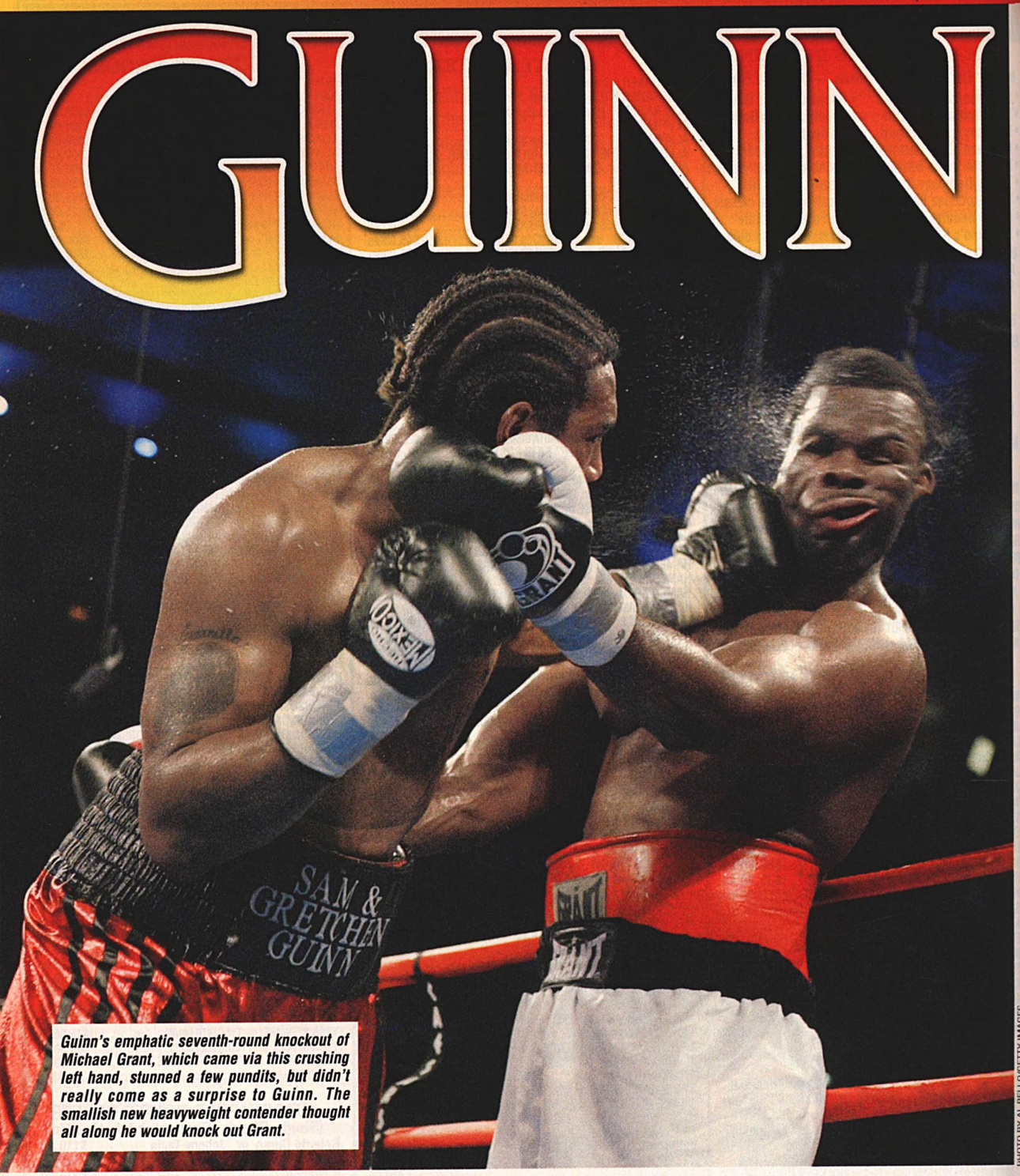
GUINN GRINS & WINS

The Beating He Put On Grant Was No Laughing Matter



Guinn's emphatic seventh-round knockout of Michael Grant, which came via this crushing left hand, stunned a few pundits, but didn't really come as a surprise to Guinn. The smallish new heavyweight contender thought all along he would knock out Grant.

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

By Joe Santoliquito

When Dominick Guinn was packing for Atlantic City a few days before the biggest fight of his life, he laughed at anything anyone said to him. A day before he would face the daunting task of toppling Michael Grant, the smallish Houston-based heavyweight joked his way through the prefight press conference. Mere hours before Guinn actually stepped through the ropes in the highest-profile fight of his professional career, he smiled uncontrollably.

Maybe it was hubris that caused Guinn to behave that way. Maybe it was his way of deflecting any added pressure attached to the step he was about to take. Or maybe it was an inside joke only Guinn knew, played on anyone who ever doubted he was capable of crushing someone like Grant and becoming a player in the heavyweight picture.

Whatever the case, Guinn stopped laughing long enough to score an emphatic seventh-round stoppage of Grant on the HBO-televised undercard of Arturo Gatti-Micky Ward III on June 7. Now Guinn has been plunged into the thick of the heavyweight arms race, and not because of the fact that he beat Grant, but because of how the 6'2", 218-pounder destroyed him.

Guinn's triumph provided some answers, but it also raised an unavoidable question: Is Guinn good enough to make a run at the heavyweight title? Or was his success against Grant based more on the fact that he beat a one-time contender who was nothing more than damaged goods?

After passing the most significant test of his career, Guinn wasn't sure where he was headed. He was just pleased with showing the boxing world what he already knew.

"It was easy, and I knew all along that it would be easy, that's why I was laughing so much before the fight," Guinn explained a few days after beating Grant. "I knew that this guy couldn't beat me. But to tell the truth, I don't know where this victory puts me. I figure it puts me in the door. I was one of

Though the Grant victory was impressive, Guinn's trainers, Ronnie Shields (left) and Mark Breland (right), want to move "The Southern Disaster" very cautiously. Shields points out that Guinn has never been 10 rounds as a pro.

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Guinn was giving up 36 pounds and about five inches in height, yet he kept Grant on his heels throughout much of the fight. Despite the physical differences, Guinn was still able to find his range against the bigger man.

those guys that was going to keep getting fights, and if the media didn't notice me, I was going to eventually surprise a few people like I did against Grant. Grant had all of the advantages coming into the fight. But I just knew I was going to knock Grant out. I knew it, and nothing was going to stop me."

So Guinn, 22-0 (17), will move forward with a deliberate timetable put together by manager Shelly Finkel, promoter Main Events, and trainers Mark Breland and Ronnie Shields, who are all certain of one thing: The 28-year-old Guinn will be moved cautiously. Shields pointed out that the Grant fight was only the second scheduled 10-rounder for "The Southern Disaster." The first came in Guinn's previous fight, a ninth-round stoppage of Charles Hatcher in April.

"I still want to be selective," said Shields. "Now it takes nothing away from what Dominick achieved. Michael Grant was one of the top fighters in the world a few years ago. The man beat seven straight fighters before facing Dominick. If anyone could have beaten Grant, why didn't any one of those seven guys beat him?

"We'll take Dominick slow right now. We want to get Dominick more rounds. He's been 10 rounds in the gym a lot, but he's never been 10 rounds in a real fight. We want to keep building Dominick's confidence level. Beating Grant absolutely is the biggest victory of his career, and he did it in style. But we want to be patient and take our time."

Guinn's rise comes at an interesting time in the heavyweight division. Several of the top-10 heavyweights ranked by THE RING would be considered small by today's standards, starting with Chris Byrd, the number-one contender to world champion Lennox Lewis, as well as Roy Jones, Evander Holyfield, and Mike Tyson.

Shields stressed that Guinn's not yet ready for that caliber of fighter. Carl Moretti, vice president of Main Events, agreed that moving slowly is in Guinn's best interest, considering that the average age of the heavyweight champion and his top 10 contenders is nearly 33½.

"The heavyweight division changes every time someone fights, but there is no rush with Dominick," Moretti said. "We'd like to see Dominick fight more top-15, top-20 contenders, and see where he is after that. Dominick has had only 22 pro fights, but he has a lot of experience, and he's progressed as planned. He's right where he should be. The great thing is that there is no pressure on us and no pressure on Guinn to advance that quickly right now.

"I would say that Dominick has passed some of the other younger guys, because of his age and the fact that he has had 300 ama-

teur fights. But he still has to progress a little farther. Our goal is not for Guinn to fight for the heavyweight title, but to win it. Within a year, he'll take that step up and fight guys in the top-10 area."

Guinn's poise is one element that could carry him far. He came into the fight in the best shape of his pro career, and had a surreal confidence facing the 6'7", 254-pound Grant, despite the fact that he was giving away 36 pounds and five inches in height. When the two squared off in the ring, the size difference was almost comical, yet The Southern Disaster was calm, which was very rare for him.

"Ronnie gave me so much confidence that I wasn't jittery like I usually am before fights," Guinn said. "I was focused, more focused than I've ever been for a fight."

Guinn attacked from the outset, seeking to earn Grant's respect in the opening minutes of the fight. But the contest did not really sway completely to Guinn's favor until the third round, when he clubbed Grant, 38-3 (29), with a brutal left hook that folded the behemoth to the canvas for the first knockdown. Guinn continued his assault on Grant in the fourth round, pounding away inside and landing another devastating hook that put Grant down for a second time and a combination that floored him a third time.

Guinn stuck with the game plan Shields laid out for him, which involved positioning his right glove under his chin to catch Grant's telegraphed right uppercut and countering over the top with a left hook. The lanky Grant, meanwhile, didn't appear to have the temperament or the chin, to deal with Guinn.

"We looked at all of Michael Grant's fights, and the only way he fights is by staying inside," Shields said. "He played right into our hands. We knew that. That right uppercut he throws is the shot that Lennox Lewis knocked him out with, so Grant adopted that from Lennox, and that was his downfall. He tried to adopt another man's punch."

Though clearly in a position to score a knockout, Guinn remained in a comfortable cocoon, venturing just far enough to do damage to Grant and retreat before Grant could answer. At times, Shields had to get in Guinn's face about finishing the job, which

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Guinn's left hook proved to be devastating to Grant. Part of Guinn's fight plan was to battle inside and protect himself against Grant's right uppercut, then counter with the hook.

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Guinn dropped Grant four times in the fight. Referee Benji Estevez finally called a halt to the one-sided affair at the 1:21 mark of the seventh.

Guinn eventually did in the seventh with a brutal left for the fourth and final knockdown. Though Grant beat the count, referee Benji Estevez wisely called a halt at the 1:21 mark.

"Guinn is very fluid and very smooth, and obviously a decent puncher," said Eric Bottjer, the matchmaker for Cedric Kushner Promotions, which promotes Grant. "He seems to have a coolness about him, and people may interpret that as a lack of fire, but he's always handled himself well. The most impressive thing to me about the Grant fight is that Guinn didn't go nuts. He was very calm and under control.

"Guinn had progressed enough as a pro that he was ahead of Grant going into that fight. Unless Grant made something big happen early, he wasn't going to win. And Grant hadn't shown in his recent fights that he was able to make big things happen early, that's why I thought Guinn was going to win. That may sound strange coming from me, since we promote Grant, but I saw this happening."

Jim Lampley, HBO's blow-by-blow man, was also impressed by Guinn's emotional stability during the fight, and says that Guinn has a factor working for him that could spell great things.

"During our prefight meeting with Guinn, we all took note of how much of an emotional flatliner he is," Lampley said. "To me, though, in the heavyweight division, the long, traditional amateur career is a defining qualification. Lennox Lewis had it. Chris Byrd. Roy Jones. This guy had a very distinguished amateur career. Outside of Hasim Rahman, you can't name anyone who has legitimately gotten close to a heavyweight title without a prolonged amateur career. Guinn has it, and I think he has the key qualification to succeed. He is smallish by today's heavyweight standards, but I think he has a chance to figure into the mix because of his experience and his calm, workman-like personality."

Hours after beating Grant, Guinn started to learn how life could quickly change with one high-quality victory on national TV. He couldn't gamble at the casino on fight night, because people began to recognize him. Guinn, with his thick Southern drawl, simply said, "Thank you, and I appreciate you coming and watching the fight."

He wants to keep the Grant victory in proper perspective. He's had his share of humbling personal experiences, like getting shot in his arm and leg the night before he graduated from high school in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Taking those bullets had a doubly negative effect on him, as it led to a period in his life where he was incarcerated for dealing guns.

"I was young and dumb, at 19 and 20 years old, and I didn't care," Guinn recalled. "If someone was shooting at me, I was shooting back at them. I just turned it all around. That's when I started getting into trouble. I sold these guys guns, and they got caught and turned on me when I was 19. When you're living out in the country,

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

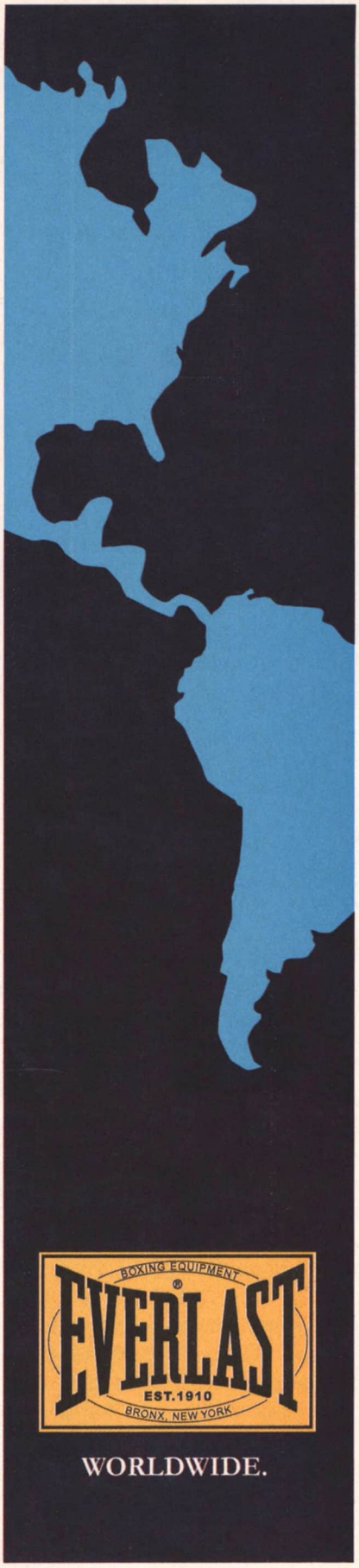
Guinn doesn't know what's next for himself, so in the meantime he'll savor the Grant victory and try to get back into the ring two more times by the end of this year. Guinn's handlers have no specific timetable set as to when they want to put him in with top-10 opposition.

there's nothing else to do but gang-bang and shoot guns. I think what set me straight was when I got sick in the county jail. It's the first time I stayed in jail for a long time. I was 20, in jail, but I always knew I was going to box, I just didn't know how far I'd go with it. I can say I didn't believe in myself too much then. I was sitting in that jail wondering what I would do with my life. I set goals for myself."

Some of those goals are now turning into reality. Guinn acknowledges it's nice that a few more people know who he is, but maintains that won't change him. When the bright lights come blazing down on him again in the ring, Guinn will crack his usual smile and laugh.

"I don't have to deal with all of that attention now," Guinn said. "I can deal with it when the time comes, but if I don't have to, I don't want to. I'd rather sit back and just chill. I think things will change. Whatever life has to bring me, I can deal with it. I'm ready for the spotlight, but I like how it is now, where barely anyone knows me."

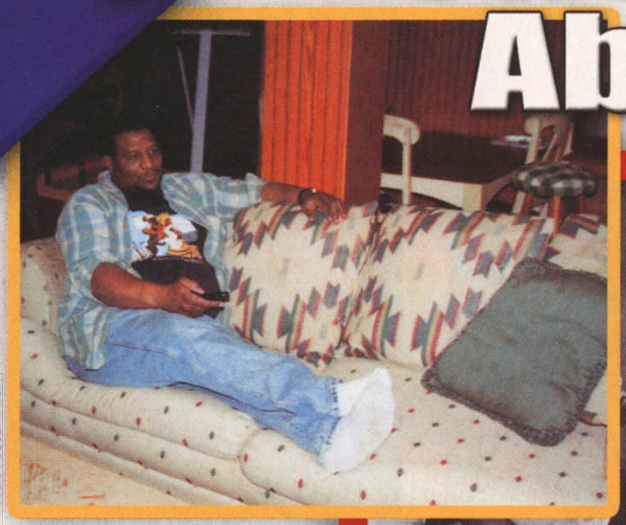
Maybe not for long. ■



The RING UPDATE:

LEE ROY MURPHY

"I Never Think About 1980"



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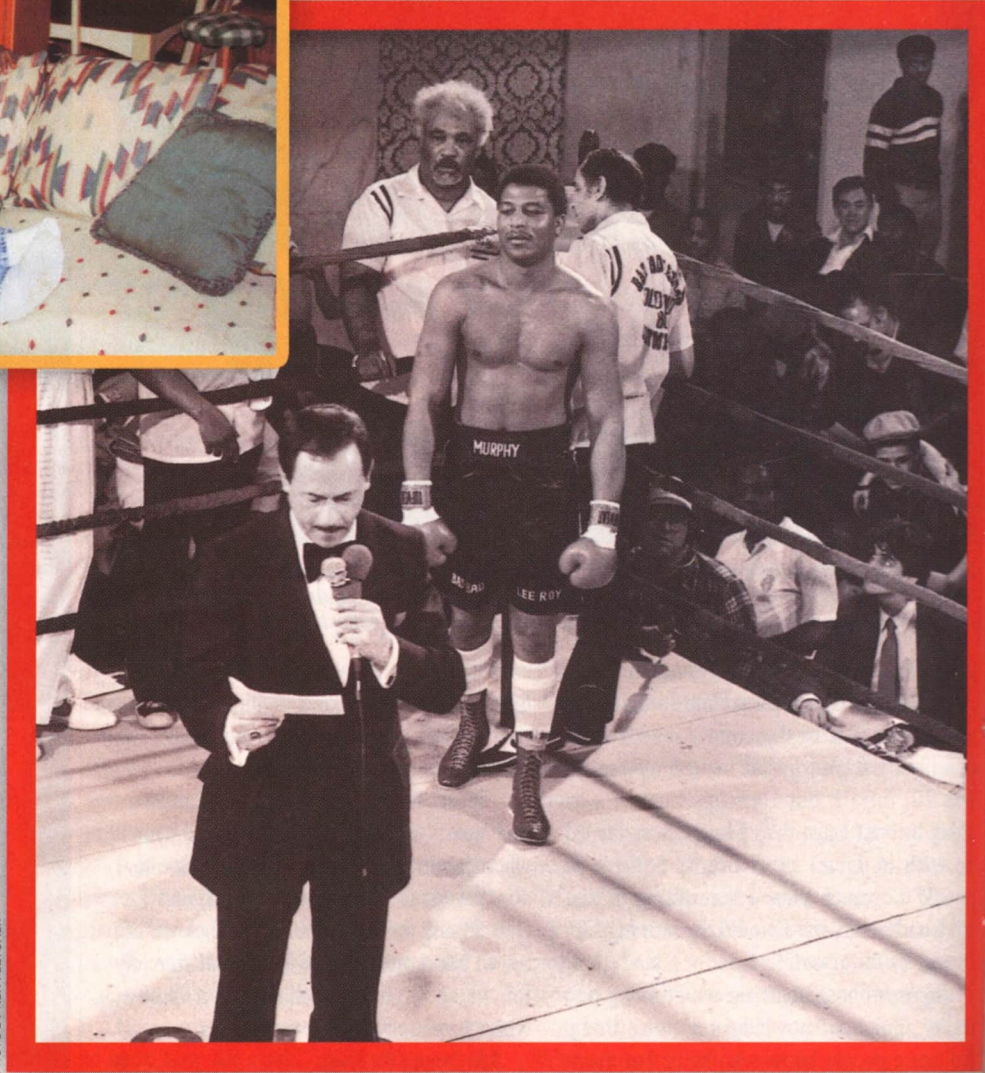


PHOTO BY KEN FLETCHER

In 1982, Murphy was a promising young fighter on his way to a cruiserweight title (right), but some 20 years later, as he relaxes on the couch in the basement of his Chicago home (above), boxing couldn't be farther from his mind. That's former trainer/manager Jim Strickland over Murphy's left shoulder in the boxing photo.

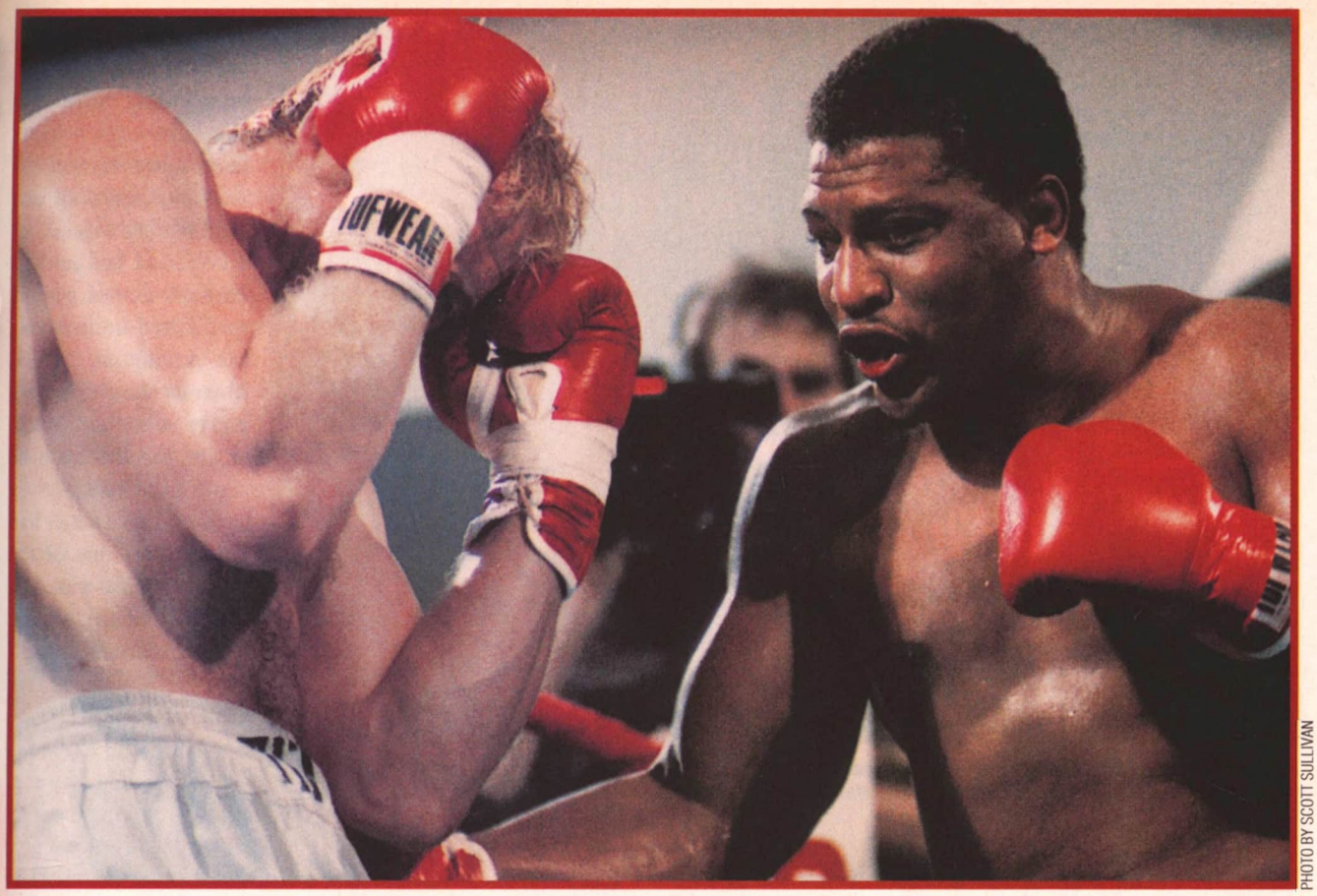


PHOTO BY SCOTT SULLIVAN

A year removed from his IBF title reign, Murphy goes to the body en route to a decision win over Bobby Crabtree in Chicago. The hard-hitting Murphy won 30 of his 34 pro fights, but never became the star he might have been had the U.S. not boycotted the 1980 Olympics.

By Joseph Hoff

Ideally, a young Chicago-born fighter named Lee Roy Murphy emerges from the glowing furnace of blood and sweat and toil and, amid pomp and revelry, ascends to the highest tier of the platform at the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, where somebody slips a gold medal around his neck as "The Star-Spangled Banner" plays in the background. The moment is one of the most moving in his brief life of 22 years. It will be one of the most memorable events of his whole life. He has made an entire nation proud. And he has made especially proud his mom, dad, and 12 siblings, and his teammates, trainers, and managers. They know what he has endured to arrive at this moment.

Lee Roy Murphy returns to the United States for a hero's welcome. The television networks focus on his all-American image, the sheer power of his punches, and his electrifying smile. Coca-Cola and Wheaties and other products peddled by America's corporate titans tap into the young boxer's wellspring of personality and talent and offer him lucrative product endorsement deals. Murphy's image splashes across television screens in living rooms all over America. He is a household name. Promoting such a likeable, recognizable person for pro bouts is as easy as it would be now for Murphy to go back and lick the old neighborhood bullies.

But this isn't how it turned out. Not at all. Instead, Lee Roy Murphy reeled after taking a punishing blow. In January of 1980, he was stunned not by a more formidable opponent, but by the U.S. boycott of the Olympics in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Suddenly, Murphy, favored to win the gold medal, found himself taking a wrong turn. He got a ride down the avenue of broken dreams. Everything looked fuzzy and blurred and unfamiliar. Murphy had spent years training for a dream denied. He had given up the present for something much larger in the future. Then, the pot of gold vanished like a mirage rising off the asphalt on a long, hard road workout.

"We were both very downcast," recalled Murphy's former manager and trainer, Jim Strickland, about the boycott. "It really discouraged Lee Roy. He had really anticipated being a gold medal winner."

Murphy sat down with Strickland, who asked him if he wanted to fight again. Murphy answered that he didn't know. He soon chose to go to Colorado Springs to train for 2½ months. Then, he traveled to the Alternate Olympics in Kenya, where he defeated Danny Jackson of Puerto Rico for the gold medal.

But the disappointments continued to mount for Murphy even after that triumph. Prior to the Alternate Olympics, promoter Bob Arum and Strickland tentatively agreed on a contract over dinner at Strickland's house. The contract would have enabled Murphy to compete in Kenya and then to compete as a professional under a contract with Arum upon

Amateur opponent Mike Scully hits the deck against the heavy-handed "Solid Gold" Murphy. In his extensive 386-fight amateur career, Murphy won 15 city and national titles, plus a gold medal at the Alternate Olympics in Kenya.

his return. But the contract did not come to fruition, in part because of the fact that Murphy was not as marketable as he would have been had he boxed in the Olympics in Moscow.

"Lee Roy was once again disheartened," Strickland explained. "He never again had the same enthusiasm."

Murphy nonetheless went on to win the IBF cruiserweight title, beating Marvin Camel by 14th-round kayo in 1984. He successfully defended the title three times, knocking out Young Joe Louis, Chisanda Mutti, and Dorcey Gaymon. Murphy reigned for two years, until he lost to Rickey Parkey in 1986. Murphy later moved up to heavyweight before retiring in '91. After making a two-bout comeback attempt in '98, he finished with a career mark of 30-4 (23).

Twenty-three years have passed now since the boycott. That's time enough for the dust of broken dreams to settle for the 45-year-old Murphy. It's also time enough for the making of new dreams and a new life.

"I never think about 1980," said Murphy, whose words are every bit as resounding as the right he used to throw to send opponents reeling.

Murphy's ascent as a boxer began in the fourth grade when his family moved from the west side to the Robert Taylor homes on the south side of Chicago. Immediately, bullies entered the young boy's life. Murphy's teachers let him leave school early for his own safety. Amid the threats, Murphy retreated to south side gyms such as the Chicago Park District's Fuller Park Gym and Wentworth Gardens, where he took up boxing. He credits an old friend named Norman Winters with getting him started in the sport.

"I started boxing to protect myself, to keep the bullies off me," said Murphy. "As I went on, I got better and better."

Strickland, who boxed as an amateur before becoming a pharmacist, witnessed Murphy's growth. He first saw Murphy box in the Golden Gloves at St. Andrews Gym in Chicago when the fighter was in high school. He liked the young boxer's power and his ability to turn a fight around. Strickland became Murphy's trainer and manager, and remained with him throughout his amateur years and his professional career.

"When he got in the ring, a hush fell over the crowd," Strickland recalled of the young fighter.

Murphy was particularly fond of the excitement, the glory, and the crowd applause as a young boxer. He sometimes grew impatient, however, with the rigorous training and conditioning expected of a boxer of his caliber. Perhaps that is why he specialized in delivering the knockout punch. Murphy could beat a boxer who had better skills just because he could hit so hard.

By 1975, he had emerged as one of the most powerful punchers seen by Chicago in years, and he found himself winning every tournament in the city. In '76, he made the Olympic Box-Offs, and he breezed through the competition until losing to Keith Brooks, who had boxed in the U.S. Marine Corps and would go on to lose to Michael Spinks in the finals. Murphy nonetheless emerged from the defeat with self-confidence, knowing how close he had come to being an Olympian.

"If I fought and got beat, I moved on," the level-headed Murphy said. "It was water under the bridge."

Murphy subsequently set his sights on the 1980 Olympics—a lofty ambition for the boy who had taken up boxing for the purpose of warding off bullies on the mean streets of south Chicago. He went to Atlanta, where he had six bouts. Alvino Manson proved the toughest opponent for Murphy. Much like Murphy, Manson hit hard, and Murphy, with his mouth bloody, found himself on the ropes at one point in the fight. He admits he was scared—mainly because it was his first televised fight. Then, one punch from Manson, as Murphy said, "woke me up." He came back to win the fight and a place on the U.S. Olympic boxing team. Murphy's teammates elected him team captain.

"I was young and in my prime and nobody could beat me," he said.

But those days are long gone, and Murphy has moved on. That's perhaps most evident in looking at Murphy's

home, located on a quiet, shady street in Beverley, a neighborhood on Chicago's south side. There are no visible indications anywhere of the 386 amateur fights. Nor is there any hint of the 15 city and national titles captured between 1975 and 1979, including the '79 National Golden Gloves and the '79 North American Games. Nor is there any suggestion of victories in 13 of 17 international bouts while a member of the U.S. National Team. Gone are all signs of 34 pro bouts and a major title reign. The only way Murphy will talk much about the 1980 Olympic boycott is if pressed.

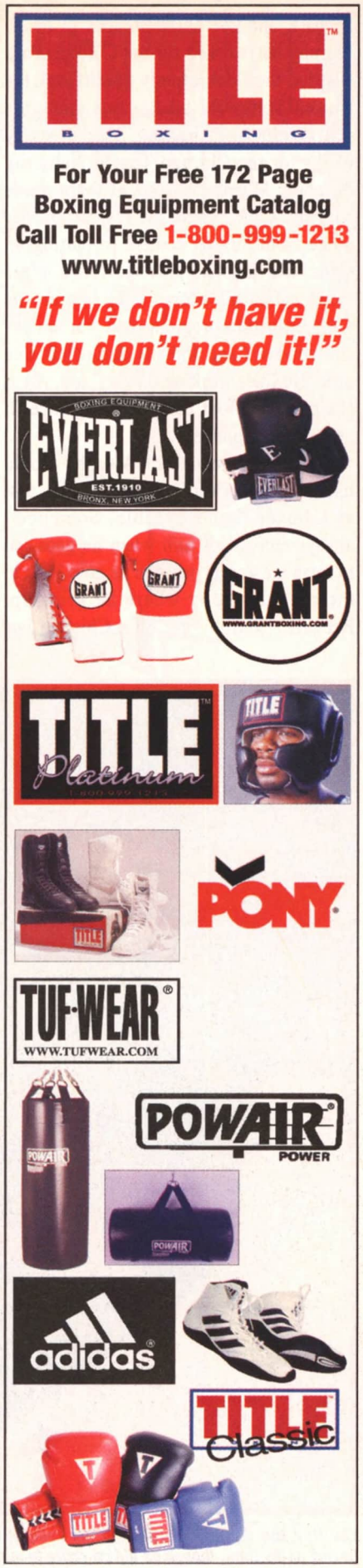
"It sort of bothered me," Murphy offered.

It is a concession that Murphy makes grudgingly. As the former cruiserweight king sits back on the sofa in the living room of his home, one almost gets the sense that he is more annoyed by the mere topic than by the actual sting of the disappointment itself. He bears no bitterness. Murphy's boxing career is made to seem more distant by the fact that he has to retreat to a faraway corner of his home to retrieve a framed photo story about himself, which he received for winning the Golden Gloves in '79.

Not long after Murphy returns to the room with the memento, a baby begins to cry somewhere in the house. He says the baby is a grandchild. Murphy's daughter is heard stirring. She comes to the door leading into the living room and walks away. Today, Lee Roy "Solid Gold" Murphy is a family man. He has a wife,

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEE ROY MURPHY

Murphy shares a hug with his mother, Katie. Murphy, one of 13 children, had always hoped to make his large family proud by winning an Olympic gold medal.



Barbara, and five children, ages 11 to 22. Murphy has worked for the Chicago Park District, the Cook County Sheriff, and the United States Postal Service since his retirement from boxing. He currently works for the Chicago Transit Authority in labor. Murphy has spent eight years with the CTA, where his responsibilities range from mixing cement to putting up signs. His favorite place to retire is the basement in his home. That's where he watches history programs and war movies and cowboys and Indians during his free time. He likes working on cars, too. A car sits on blocks out back by the garage. It needs a new muffler.

No matter how much Murphy would like to move forward with his life, his past as a boxer is inescapable. Somebody always recognizes him when he goes out to roam the streets or when he goes back to the neighborhood where he grew up. Recently, Murphy got on a Chicago bus and sat down. A fellow passenger recognized Murphy and began to shower him with praise. The scene attracted the attention of still more passengers. Murphy, who by his own admission is shy, sunk down in his seat to avoid the unwanted attention.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEE ROY MURPHY

Murphy, now 45 and a father of five, poses with three of his kids: (from left) daughter Loreal, son Dante, and daughter Jerrieal. On the right is Murphy's sister Janie.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEE ROY MURPHY

Lee Roy and Barbara Murphy cut the cake at their wedding in 1992. Murphy was retired from boxing at the time, though he did un-retire to make a brief comeback six years later.

"Wherever I go, people notice me," Murphy said. "People said I was the hardest right-hander in the world."

The memories of Murphy linger at the Fuller Park Gym on the corner of 48th Street and Princeton Avenue on the south side. Just ask Rodney Harper, a jazz drummer and member of the Savoy Trio. Harper still works out at Fuller Park, and recalled of Murphy, "Nobody wanted to mess with him."

Murphy misses the people from the sport. He does not miss having to go 12 or more hard rounds, though. Murphy has been inundated with offers from people who would like to see him return. A man who wants Murphy to run his boxing program called recently. Some others would like for Murphy to become amateur boxing commissioner. Murphy is considering returning to the ring as a referee, but that's about as far as he'd like to go.

"I really don't miss boxing," Murphy said, "because everybody reminds you of everything you ever did." ■

Joseph Hoff is a freelance writer based in Chicago.

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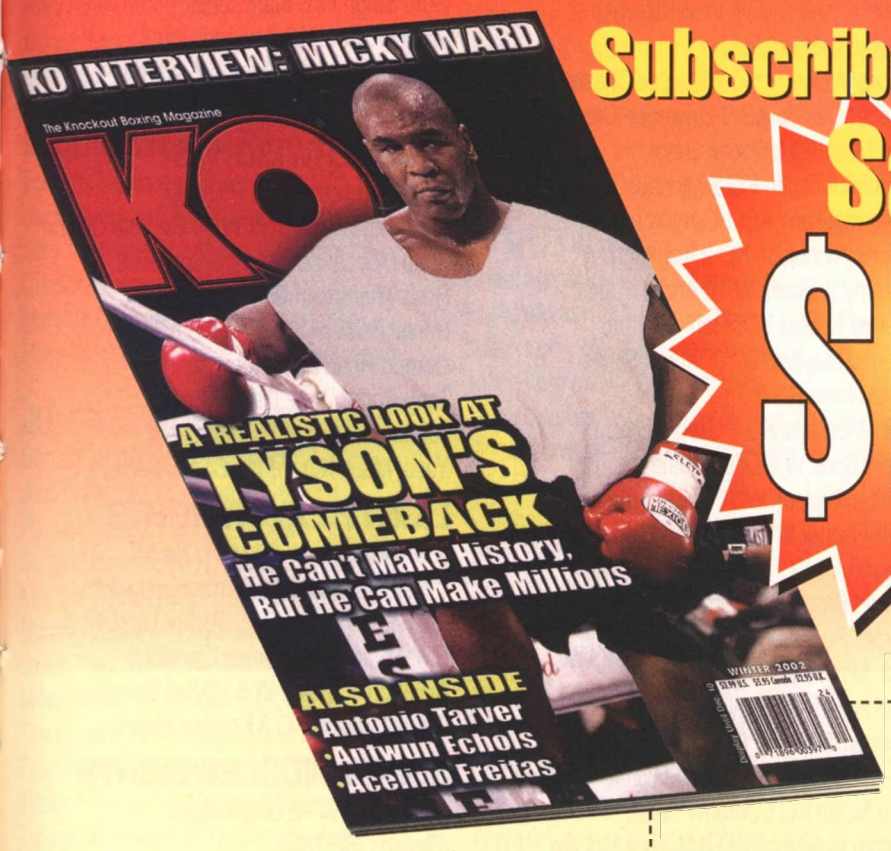

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SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Lennox Lewis KO 6 Vitali Klitschko
(Retains World Title)
Lance Whitaker KO 2 Russell Chasteen
Eliecer Castillo KO 9 Lawrence Clay-Bey
Joe Mesi KO 1 Robert Davis
Dominick Guinn KO 7 Michael Grant
Oleg Maskaev KO 1 Gary Winmon
Danell Nicholson KO 2 Ken Murphy
Jeremy Williams W 10 Andre Purlett
Gerald Nobles W 8 Ron Guerrero
Imamu Mayfield D 10 Taurus Sykes
Orlin Norris KO 3 Troy Weida
Saul Montana KO 7 Greg Pickrom
Malik Scott W 8 Otis Tisdale
Steffen Nielsen W 10 Julius Francis
Willi Fischer W 10 Andreas Sidon
Fabio Moli W 10 Alexander Vassiliev
Calvin Brock KO 1 Jim Strohl
Rydell Booker W 10 Arthur Williams
Bob Mirovic KO 3 Mitch O'Hello
Earl Hayes W 8 Dale Crowe
Tomasz Bonin W 8 Antoine Palatis
Jo-El Scott KO 5 Onebo Maxime
Leo Nolan KO 5 Jeremy Bates
Sultan Ibragimov KO 8 Marcus McGee
Samuel Peter KO 4 Lyle McDowell
Paolo Vidoz W 6 Antoine Palatis
Guru Singh W 6 Scott Jones
Malcolm Tann KO 2 Jason Curry
Billy Douglas KO 2 Myron Barryman
Butterbean KO 1 Troy Roberts

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Carl Thompson KO 4 Phil Day
Krzysztof Wlodarczyk W 10 Roberto Coelho
Enzo Maccarinelli KO 4 Bruce Scott
Ross Thompson W 6 Sam Reese
Daniel Rowsell KO 5 Paul Smallman
Damon Reed KO 2 Tony Kenney
Terry Porter W 12 Dan Ward
Johnny Jensen W 6 Uriah Grant
Yusaf Mack KO 4 Juan Carlos Viloria

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Julio Gonzalez W 10 Manu Ntoh
Clinton Woods KO 7 Demetrius Jenkins
Etienne Whitaker KO 2 Tucker Lambert
Elvir Muriqi KO 4 James Crawford
Alejandro Lakatus W 8 Mikhail Balovnev
Darnell Wilson KO 3 Rodney Moore

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Sven Ottke W 12 David Starie
(Retains IBF Title)
Joe Calzaghe KO 2 Byron Mitchell

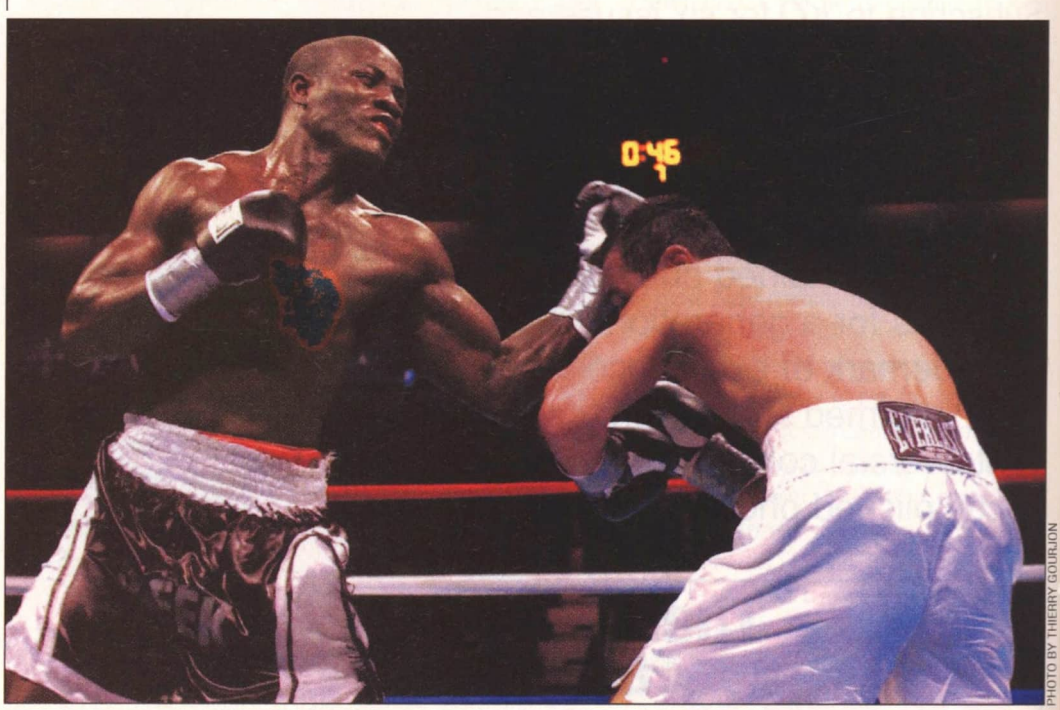

PHOTO BY THIERRY GOURJON

Emmanuel Clottey comes on late to upset Muhammad Abdullaev

Tito Mendoza KO 2 Ray Berry
Bert Schenk KO 6 Leonard Townsend
Brian Magee KO 4 Andre Thysse
Arturo Rivera D 10 Kirino Garcia
Kabary Salem W 10 Derrick Whitley
Francisco Mora W 8 Italo Meza
Romero Johnson W 6 Jose Spearman
Kelly Pavlik KO 2 Rico Cason
Daniel Edouard W 4 Earl Allen
Laila Ali KO 6 Valerie Mahfood

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Epifanio Mendoza KO 1 Ruben Williams
Jorge Sendra KO 7 Alejandro Valls
Gary Lockett W 10 Michael Monaghan
Cristian Sanavia W 6 Pierre Moreno
Mariano Carrera KO 8 Javier Mamani
Peter Manfredo Jr. W 10 Victor Rosado

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Daniel Santos W 12 Fulgencio Zuniga
Julio Garcia KO 1 Chantel Stanciel
Roman Karmazin KO 2 Michael Rask
Sergio Martinez W 12 Richard Williams
Michael Lerma KO 3 Eduardo Gutierrez
Robert Frazier W 8 Candy Robertson
Jason Papillion KO 4 Benji Singleton
Mihaly Kotai W 12 Akhmed Oligov
Tim Shocks W 10 Alejandro Jimenez
Frankie Randall W 6 Patrick Thorns
Tybius Flowers W 10 Jose Medina
Tshepo Mashego KO 8 Vincent Vuma
Simone Rotolo W 6 Jorge Ortiz
Rasheem Brown KO 1 Josh Onyango

WELTERWEIGHTS

Arturo Gatti W 10 Micky Ward
Michele Piccirillo KO 6 Daniel Veliz
Manuel Gomez KO 6 Arturo Reyes
Jose Luis Castillo KO 5 Gustavo Corral
Juan Valenzuela KO 6 Brian Adams
James Hare W 12 Roman Dzuman
Jose Celaya KO 2 Fray Luis Sierra
Hercules Kyvelos W 10 Ener Julio
Carlos Baldomir KO 4 Verdell Smith
Frederic Klose W 12 Alexander Vetoux
Jeffrey Resto KO 8 Saul Duran
Ishe Smith KO 2 Sal Lopez
Oscar Diaz W 6 Jerome Elder
Dimitry Salita KO 3 John Hoffman
Ivan Robinson W 6 Mike McFail
Dewey Welliver W 10 Juan Baldwin
Scott De Pompe W 6 Arthur Medina
Brad Thompson W 8 Steve Verdin
Sven Paris KO 3 Walter Daneff

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Oktay Urkal W 12 Eamonn Magee
Miguel Cotto KO 2 Rocky Martinez
Mike Stewart KO 3 Terronn Millett
Kelson Pinto W 10 Emmanuel Augustus
Carlos Vilches Tech. Win 6 Ramon Barbero
Gary Balletto KO 4 Frank Houghtaling
Demetrius Hopkins KO 1 Shakha Moore
Andreas Kotelnik KO 3 Zimele Mpusula
David Diaz KO 5 Andre Baker
Al Gonzales W 8 Humberto Chavez
Victor Hugo Castro KO 5 Ariel Villalba
Lucia Rijker W 8 Jane Couch

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Angel Manfredy KO 7 John Bailey
Phillip Ndou KO 4 Yoni Vargas
Julien Lorcy KO 1 Ivo Golakov
Julien Lorcy KO 2 Adrian Parlogea
Javier Jauregui KO 4 Juan Gomez Trinidad
Diego Corrales KO 3 Damian Fuller
Julio Diaz KO 7 Miguel Huerta
Stefano Zoff W 12 David Burke
Omar Bernal W 10 Dorin Spivey
Isidro Tejedor W 10 Hector Lizarraga
Justin Juuko W 10 Godfrey Munika
Michele Delli Paoli KO 10 Sayan Sanchat
Randy Suico W 10 Kazunori Fujita
Roque Cassiani D 8 Luis Lizarraga
Urbano Antillon W 10 Ivan Valle
Rolando Reyes KO 2 Orlando Membreno

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Bones Adams Tech. Draw 4 Manuel Sepeda
David Santos KO 5 Sean Fletcher
Julio Pablo Chacon KO 3 Justo Martinez
In Jin Chi KO 4
Thongcharoen Mahasapcondo
Ramon Cruz KO 7 Carlos Gerena
Jorge Solis D 12 Wilson Alcorro
Gavin Rees KO 1 Daniel Thorpe
Rogers Mtagwa KO 3 Corey Ben Alarcon
Octavio Lara KO 2 Randy Dobbs

FEATHERWEIGHTS

William Abelyan KO 3 Alejandro Estrada
Michael Brodie W 12 Juan Cabrera
Yoddamrong Sithyodthong W 12
Rud 4K Kevkatche
Zahir Raheem KO 4 Ablorh Sowah
Guty Espadas KO 4 Juan Manuel Chavez
Juan Carlos Ramirez W 12 Hector Marquez
Shigeru Nakazato W 10 Petchngam Vorapin
Harold Grey W 10 Jose Quintana
Danny Flores W 10 Edel Ruiz
Cyril Thomas Tech. Win 9 Manuel Calvo
Humberto Soto W 10 Armando Cordova
Cesar Figueroa KO 2 Omar Adorno
Alvin Brown KO 3 Sheldon Wile
Steven Luevano KO 2 Aristeo Perez
Robert Guerrero KO 1 Jose Luis Tula
Bernard Dunne KO 1 Terrell Hargrove

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Mark Johnson W 8 Ricardo Medina
Mauricio Martinez KO 3 Francisco Tejedor
Somsak Sithchatchawal W 12 Alex Escaner
Yoshikane Nakajima W 10
Junichi Watanabe
Akihiro Kanai KO 4 Yoshimasa Shibata

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Ricardo Vargas W 12 Alex Baba
Ratanachai Vorapin KO 1 Jacob Mohlabi
Sornpichai Pisnurachank KO 2
Kongdej Sithtradtrakarn
Jhonny Gonzalez KO 4 Ramon Leyte
David Guerault KO 7 Noel Wilders
Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym W 12
Boy Guevarra
Tonya Harding KO 4 Emily Gosa

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Masamori Tokuyama W 12
Katsushige Kawashima
(Retains WBC Title)
Mbwana Matumla KO 4 Magoma Shabani
Cyril Bellanger KO 5 Toufik Tabi
Hideyasu Ishihara W 12
Phissesh Vor Suraphol
Hengky Wuwungan KO 5 Zwandile Smile
Pramuansak Phosuwan W 6 Malusi Bongco

FLYWEIGHTS

Eric Morel W 12 Isidro Garcia
(Retains WBA Title)
Omar Narvaez KO 5 Everardo Morales
Denkaosaen Kaowichit KO 3
Jimmy Pinontoan
Vic Darchinyan KO 4
Wandee Chor Chareon
Giuseppe Lagana Tech. Win 6 Luis Monges
Luis Maldonado KO 7 Rafael Chavez

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Pichit Siriwat W 10 Flash Simbajon
Fahlan Sakkreerin KO 4 Rolando Atande

STRAWWEIGHTS

Jose Antonio Aguirre KO 12 Keitaro Hoshino
(Retains WBC Title)
Muhammad Rachman W 10 Jun Arlos
Satoshi Kogumazaka W 10 Hideaki Shuto
Genki Ohnaka W 12 Kimoon Nah
Eagle Akakura W 8 Elmer Gejon
Hiroshi Kasamatsu D 10 Hidekazu Miyagi

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The RING

FIGHTER of the MONTH

Beating Micky Ward, regardless of the circumstances, is always a commendable accomplishment. Beating someone as tough and determined as Ward with just one hand is more than a commendable accomplishment—it's almost an unthinkable one. Yet Arturo Gatti did it, by a comfortable margin no less, proving he's just as tough and determined while establishing himself conclusively as the superior fighter at the end of their amazing trilogy.

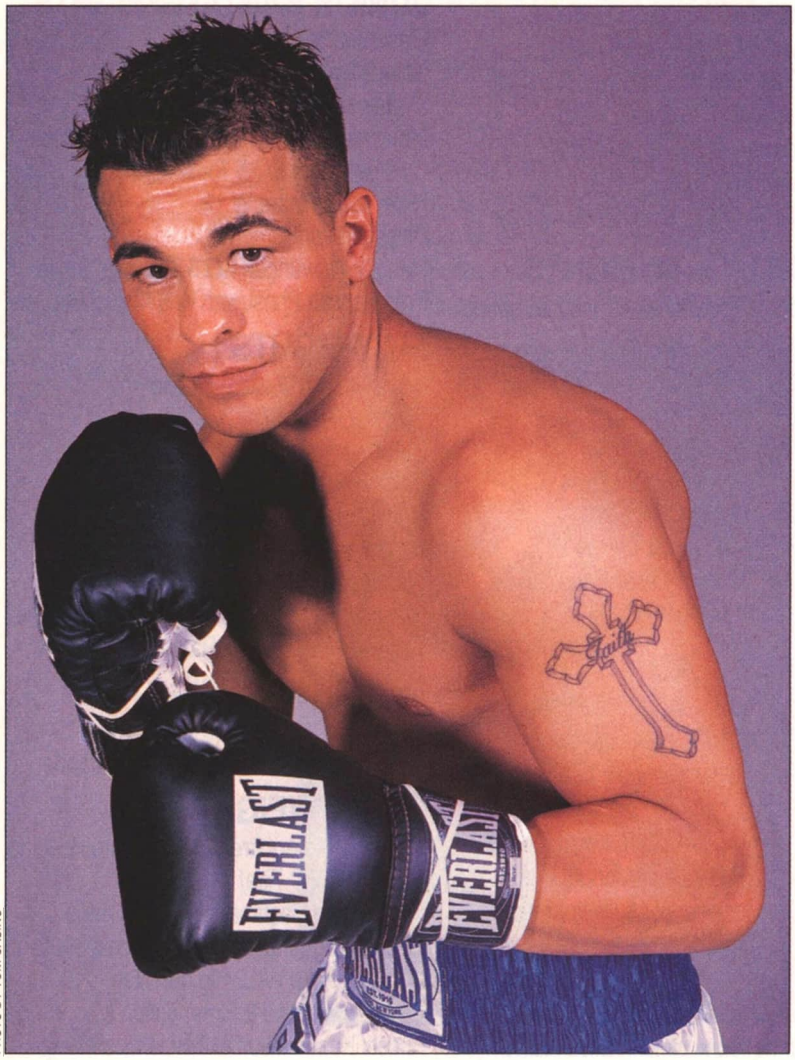

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Gatti was dominant early and seemed on his way to a possible knockout win by the time the third round was complete. But in the fourth, Gatti ruptured a tendon and broke a bone in his right hand, rendering it almost useless. Incredibly, he went on to win five of the last six rounds anyway, losing only the sixth, a round that he was winning clearly until getting knocked down just before the bell.

While not as perfect a performance as the near-shutout he pitched in the second fight with Ward, the rubber match victory was, in many regards, more impressive. In fact, it was arguably the most all-around impressive win of his career, which is why for the first time since 1996, Gatti has been named the Fighter of the Month. So let's all give him a well-deserved (and much needed) hand.

• • • •

Arturo Gatti

RINGSIDE REPORTS

Sven Ottke W 12 David Starie

Magdeburg, Germany: The confident air that Starie, 167, England, took with him to the ring dissipated a bit too soon. The challenger, who went the distance with Joe Calzaghe in January 2000 but had been contemplating retirement after losing a decision and his British Commonwealth title to South African Andre Thysse in January '03, started well, but failed to up the tempo when he needed to. Ottke, 167½, Germany, took full advantage to claim a unanimous decision. It was his division-record 18th defense of the IBF super middleweight title and his first defense of the WBA belt he claimed from Byron Mitchell by split decision in March.

Starie sensed an opportunity because of the circumstances. The retained firefighter was on the verge of hanging up his gloves when, out of the blue, the call came to his trainer and manager, Gordon Holmes, and he was handed a shot at Ottke. Starie suspected the 36-year-old titlist might be ripe for the taking—but the wily veteran has not stayed at the top of the division for five years for no reason.

The German is a master at doing just enough. He managed this against Alabama's Mitchell in March, and after sizing up Starie for several rounds, he realized what he needed to do to retain his unbeaten record once more. The challenger used his jab and lateral movement well over the opening few rounds to build a lead. But it was soon apparent that he lacked conviction. Perhaps he feared he was not in good enough condition—he was given less than a month's notice—to go all-out, but it was his only chance. Ottke hit his stride by the fourth round, and with his sharp punches from long range, he obliterated Starie's lead and assumed control.

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Ottke fires a jab en route to defense number 18

Ottke's only moment of concern in the late rounds came in the 10th, when an accidental clash of heads caused a swelling on the right side of his forehead, but referee Randy Neumann (USA) did not consider it dangerous enough to call into question Ottke's capacity to fight on. Even with protecting the injury over the final two rounds, he had done enough.

Judge Henk Meijers (Netherlands) scored 116-113, Juan Manuel Garcia (Spain) 115-113, and Remigio Ruggeri (Italy) 116-112, all for Ottke. THE RING scored 115-113 for Ottke.

"He's a very good boxer, Ottke, but if I was to compare him and Joe Calzaghe, I'd have to say that Joe's the more powerful and dangerous puncher and I'd give him a definite edge," said 29-year-old Starie, 31-3 (24), who hinted this may have been his last fight.

Ottke, 31-0 (6), is hoping to secure a big-money match with world middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins—whom Calzaghe is also chasing—before the end of the year.

Promoter: Wilfried Sauerland

(6-14-03)

Brian Doogan

Emmanuel Clottey KO 10 Muhammad Abdullaev

Uncasville, Connecticut: In a major upset, Abdullaev was exposed and knocked out by journeyman Clottey in a fight that had almost as many plot twists as a week's worth of soap opera episodes.

Ricardo Williams and Paul Delgado were originally supposed to fight in the opening bout on this ESPN2 *Friday Night Fights* telecast, but when Williams fell out with promoter Lou DiBella, he was yanked from the card. The spot was instead offered to Clottey and Abdullaev, the man who had beaten Williams to win the gold medal at the 2000 Olympics. Abdullaev accepted the assignment on four days notice, but undoubtedly wishes he hadn't.

At first it looked like the previously undefeated Abdullaev, 145, would cruise to his 12th straight professional victory. The Las Vegas-based Uzbek applied grinding pressure, lashing out with vicious swipes that smashed into Clottey's head and body with regularity. You expected Clottey, 146½, to fold at any moment, but he hung in there, pecked away with his jab, covered up or used his legs to pivot away from trouble whenever he could, and bravely absorbed Abdullaev's bombs when he couldn't.

Although Abdullaev was always right in Clottey's face, banging away, he also missed a lot of punches, which, along with his conditioning, probably contributed to his eventual downfall. Clottey, who campaigned in his native Ghana and England before moving to the U.S. in 2000, never panicked, showed solid skills and a sturdy chin, and most significantly, never stopped trying to win.

As the fight progressed and Abdullaev, 29, began to slow the pace of his attack, Clottey, also 29, showed glimpses of what lay ahead in the final round. He held his own in a brisk exchange in seventh, but was trailing by scores of 90-81 and 89-82 (twice) going into the 10th round.

At around the two-minute mark, Clottey caught his onrushing adversary with a pair of hard left hooks to the

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

Clottey comes on late to shock Abdullaev

jaw. Suddenly, Abdullaev was in deep trouble, and he stumbled across the ring on rubber legs. Clottey fired a final right that sent Abdullaev down near the ropes, but it had been the hooks that did the damage.

Abdullaev, blood tricking from a cut over his left eye, popped right back up, but then took a knee on his corner's advice, where he remained as referee Mike Ortega (USA) counted him out at the 2:19 mark. While there was some talk of Abdullaev missing the count because he doesn't speak English, judging by the dazed expression on his face, he didn't know if he was in Uncasville or Uzbekistan.

Clottey, 20-5 (18), exposed the limitations of Abdullaev's one-dimensional approach, and also showed that he was better than his spotty record seems to indicate.

Promoter: DiBella Entertainment

(6-3-03)

Phillip Ndou KO 4 Yoni Vargas

Los Angeles, California: At 26, South African Ndou, now ranked number four at junior lightweight by THE RING, could be featured in a training video showing rookies how to polish their game. He throws quick, textbook punches, almost always in combinations. He doesn't run, but he's hard to find. The man's a machine.

His opponent Vargas, a tough, local fighter, went in at 24-4 (12). They fought a scheduled 10-round lightweight contest on the Staples Center undercard of Lennox Lewis-Vitali Klitschko. Vargas, 28, soon discovered he just couldn't compete at the level of Ndou, who improved to 31-1 (30). It seemed everything Ndou threw hurt his man.

The shorter Vargas, 135, Westminster, California, got inside easily, but found no safe harbor there. The lanky Ndou, 134½, also known as "The Time Bomb," could deal out punishment at any distance. And whenever Vargas made the mistake of giving his opponent space, Ndou exacted an even higher price. Ndou ended round two with a vicious right uppercut. In round three, Vargas' head was snapping back regularly from the force of Ndou's shots. To his credit, Vargas was still trying in round four, even though he was regularly rocked by counterpunches.

But the weary Vargas was also dropping his hands and beginning to stagger. At the end of the round, his corner wisely told referee Jack Reiss (USA) their fighter could not continue.

Ndou, who previously decisioned fellow South African contender Cassius Baloyi, is too lethal to stay at this level. At 130 pounds, Carlos "Famous" Hernandez would be a test worth taking. Right now, Ndou says he's angling for junior lightweight stars Acelino Freitas or Joel Casamayor. And down the line, THE RING lightweight champion Floyd Mayweather could be in Ndou's future. That would definitely not be one to miss.

Promoter: Gary Shaw

(6-21-03)

Ivan Goldman

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam W 12 Randy Mangubat

Songkla, Thailand: WBC flyweight titleholder Pongsaklek, 112, Thailand, kept his belt by a unanimous decision over game and durable Filipino Mangubat, 112, over 12 heats. In making his seventh successful defense (and scoring his third win over Mangubat over a seven-year span), the Thailander raised his record to 47-2 (25).

The fight didn't look as one-sided as the official tallies—Roy O'Valle and Takeaki Kanaya both scored it 118-109 and Jaebong Kim had it 119-110—as the 27-year-old Mangubat mixed it up with his persistent bodyshots to befuddle the prohibitive favorite all the way. Mangubat, 31-18-1 (14), was penalized a point for hitting low in the 10th, but that wasn't a deciding factor. A bigger factor was the sense that the judges didn't seem to give the Filipino credit for his body attacks, favoring the 25-year-old Pongsaklek's shots to the face instead.

Promoter: Diamond Boxing Promotions

(6-6-03)

Joe Koizumi ■

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Ndou blasts overmatched Vargas with a right

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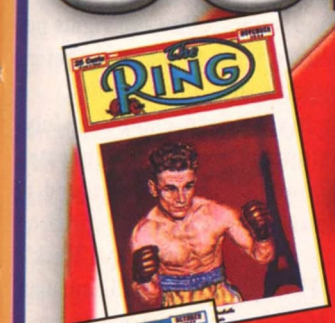

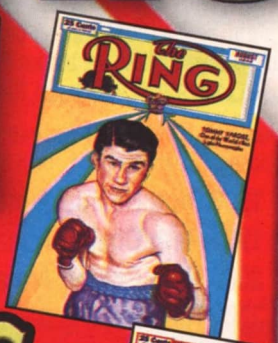

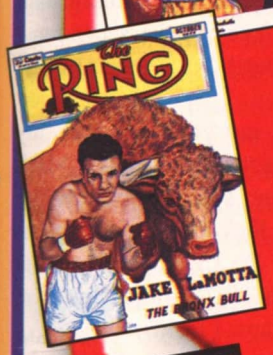

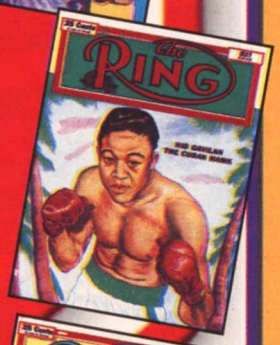

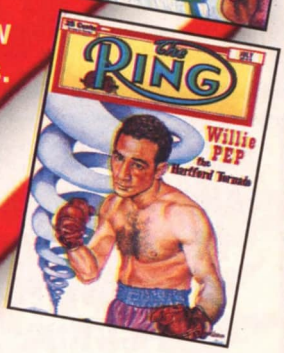

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August 1949: Tommy Yarosz, Al Weill, LaMotta-Cerdan, Elley Bennett, Joey Maxim, Willie Lewis, Charley Fusari, Nat Fleischer remembers, Fighter of the Month: Bruce Woodcock.

September 1949: Rocky Graziano, Robinson-Gavilan, Jake LaMotta, Richie Mitchell, Patsy Haley, Nat Fleischer remembers, Fighter of the Month: Ezzard Charles.

October 1949: Jake LaMotta, James D. Norris, Charles-Lesnevich, Laurent Dauthuille, Ike Williams, Steve Belloise, Vince Dundee, Battling Reddy, Irish boxers, Nat Fleischer remembers, Fighter of the Month: Ezzard Charles.

November 1949: Laurent Dauthuille, Mike Jacobs, Graziano-Fusari, Robinson-Belloise, young heavyweights, Young Brion, Johnny Indrisano & Lionel Canegata, McCarty-Palzer, Nat Fleischer remembers, Fighter of the Month: Sugar Ray Robinson

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New Face

(Continued from page 24)

Whenever Mack glances at his right biceps, the number "46" is there to remind him of his roots.

"That's my neighborhood," Mack said with a proud smile. "Mill Creek. The projects. They knocked 'em down. So I had to keep this with me for life."

On his stomach—below the mural-like tattoo across his chest of two boxing gloves and Mack's nickname "KO Time"—are the words "Pride Or Die." It's a fitting battle cry for a fighter who has come of age in the West Philly ghetto, where pride and death dangle in the air like an ever-present mist.

The death Mack has seen in West Philly is a large part of the pride that fuels his life. He fights to honor those he's lost, their names airbrushed onto his fight-night trunks. The list includes friends who were among the seven folks gunned down in a crack house shootout 2½ years ago, an incident that's become known as the Lex Street Massacre.

He also fights for the living, including his five kids and slew of young nephews and nieces. He wants to hit it big with his fists, wants to move out of the ghetto and into a posh apartment or mansion like those he sees on MTV's *Cribs*. And he wants to take his family with him.

"That was all my boys, got killed," Mack said of the Lex Street victims. "I watched them all grow up. When that happened, that pushed me. If I can get myself out the hood, then I can bring all my nephews out. I've got to make it better for them, so when they grow up they won't have to end up like the guys in the Lex Street murder."

At 11-0-1 (7), Mack is off to a good start. With the exception of a four-round draw against clubfighter Jose "Chito" Aponte in October of 2001 (due to a misunderstanding over a compromise weight, Mack had to lose three pounds the day of the fight), Mack has cruised through his first 12 pro fights.

At a slender 6'1", Mack is a smooth boxer-puncher whose skills have developed nicely under the tutelage of his demanding trainer/manager/uncle Percy "Buster" Custus, owner of the James Shuler Memorial Gym in West Philly.

His left hook and straight right are as scary as John Ruiz' pimp outfit. He needed just one left hook and 18 seconds to drop Todd Richwine for the count in September 2001. Last March, a left hook and some follow-up rights put Morgan Wilson through the ropes before the ref stopped it at 1:45 of the first.

Mack's biggest win came last July, when he stopped previously unbeaten John McKinney in the fourth round in Biloxi, Mississippi. The bout, aired on Showtime's *ShoBox* series, was Mack's TV debut. He did nothing to disappoint, dropping McKinney in the second and twice in the fourth with several overhand rights.

"My speed, my good reflexes, my movement—I got all the tools," Mack said. "I'm strong. I don't look it. A lot of people say I look like a 154-pounder. But like Oscar De La Hoya says, 'I'm skinny, I'm a little dude, but I'm strong.' That's how I feel."

Mack began taking an interest in the sport in his pre-pubescent years, back when he used to follow big bro Steven to the gym to watch him train. At nine, Yusaf began learning the Sweet Science in Custus' basement, eventually moving on to Shuler's when his uncle opened it in 1993.

As a kid, Mack had so much physical talent that he didn't understand all those hard work, dedication, and intensity cliches that make all the difference for an athlete. And Custus says he and Smith spoiled Mack, the youngest of nine kids.

Mack received a wake-up call when he was just 15. A fighter Custus recalls as "a little white boy" came into Shuler's and stopped Mack with a bodyshot.

"After that, I was like, 'Wow, I gotta get serious,'" Mack said. "I got too much skills to be playing."

Within a year, he won his first state novice Golden Gloves title. Mack eventually ran up a 40-7 amateur record and broke into USA Boxing's middleweight top 10. He fell short of earning a trip to the Olympic Trials, just missing a bid at the 1999 PAL Nationals, where he lost in the finals to eventual Olympian Jeff

Lacy. The fight was scored 5-0 for Lacy, and Mack took two standing-eight counts in the third. Still, Custus and Mack feel they were cheated by the judges, and Mack has called out Lacy after recent fights.

"I told him, don't let that be your goal, to get a rematch with that guy," Custus said. "Your goal is to wanna get a world title. I told him not to even mention Lacy no more. He didn't do it. The judges did it. Lacy didn't do anything against him. We don't need him. If he gets a title, of course we'll fight him. But I don't want him to fight Lacy just to say he wanted to get a rematch because he beat him. Because he didn't beat him, far as I'm concerned."

As Mack's reputation has grown, Custus has found more difficulty landing opponents. He said promoter Lou DiBella offered to put Mack in against big-name prospect Jerson Ravelo on two weeks notice after the McKinney fight. Custus turned it down, saying Mack deserved more time to train. He claims to have later pushed for Mack to fight Ravelo with ample time to prepare, but the offer was turned down.

Mack's best opposition has come in the gym, where he's prepped against a who's-who list of sparring partners that includes Bernard Hopkins, Paul Spadafora, Clinton Woods, Charles Brewer, Kermit Cintron, and twins Eric and Aaron Mitchell. Mack says he'll be ready for a title shot within a year. Custus wants to see him get to at least 20-0-1 first, and he's still hoping to attract a big-name promoter to help take him there.

"Five more fights," a confident Mack said. "I know they gonna be coming. Other dudes from Philly, everywhere, they gonna be trying to knock me off. I don't see it happening. I feel that right now I'm the best super middleweight in Philly."

Best in Philly? That has to mean something.

"It means a lot to me," he said. "Besides my kids and my mom and dad, it means everything to me." ■

Don Stewart covers boxing for the Reading (Pennsylvania) Eagle and is an occasional contributor to this magazine.

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April 2001: Lewis Is Too Much For Tua ... But Could Tyson Do Any Better? Interview: Max Kellerman. Also: Floyd Mayweather, Wladimir Klitschko.

June 2001: Trinidad-Jones: Superfight Or Mismatch? Interview: Virgil Hill. Also: Mayweather-Corrales, Paul Ingle, Davey Hilton, Tyson's relationship with Vargas, Judah, and Mayweather.

Aug. 2001: Sugar Shane Mosley: Too Sweet For The Bad Boy Era? Interview: Richard Steele. Also: Evander Holyfield, Roy Jones, Jesus Chavez.

Oct. 2001: Tito Power—From Fans To Foes ... Everyone's Feeling It! Interview: Lou DiBella. Also: Hasim Rahman, Vargas-Rivera, F.I.S.T.

Dec. 2001: Laila Ali: The Fighter, The Sex Symbol ... The Future Of Women's Boxing? Interview: Laila Ali. Also: Oscar De La Hoya, Tim Austin, Manny Pacquiao, Hector Camacho Jr.

Feb. 2002: Bernard Hopkins: "I Am The American Dream. I Am The American Story." Interview: Wladimir Klitschko. Also: Omar Sheika, Vernon Forrest, Juan Lazcano.

April 2002: After Hitting Rock Bottom ... Lennox Is Back On The Path To Greatness. Interview: Duva Boxing. Also: Zab Judah, Mike Tyson, Thomas Tate.

June 2002: Tyson vs. Lewis: 10-Page Preview & Analysis. Interview: Jameel McCline. Also: *Ali* movie, Dorin vs. Balbi & Ward vs. Leija.

Aug. 2002: Still Crazy After All These Years: Should Mike Tyson Be Allowed To Fight? Interview: Kostya Tszyu. Also: Barrera-Morales II preview, Ayala-Adams, Ricky Hatton.

Oct. 2002: Vernon Forrest vs. Shane Mosley: Two Careers On The Line! Interview: Fernando Vargas. Also: Mayweather-Castillo, Hopkins vs. all-time greats, heavyweight scrap heap.

Dec. 2002: Wladimir Klitschko: Would He Be Too Much For Lennox? Interview: Joe Calzaghe. Also: Barrera-Morales II, Evander Holyfield, Freddie Roach.

Winter 2002: A Realistic Look At Tyson's Comeback: He Can't Make History, But He Can Make Millions. Interview: Micky Ward. Also: Antonio Tarver, Antwun Echols, Acelino Freitas.

March 2003: Oscar De La Hoya—The War That Rages Within. Interview: Klitschko brothers. Also: Kassim Ouma, Eric Morel, holiday gifts.

May 2003: Danger Zone! Will Roy Jones Be Doomed By His Heavyweight Ego? Interview: Buddy McGirt. Also: Gatti-Ward II, Floyd Mayweather, Erik Morales.

July 2003: Boxing's Biggest X-Factor: Can Hopkins Recover From His Self-Inflicted Wounds? Interview: Shane Mosley. Also: Kostya Tszyu, DaVarryl Williamson, 10 best defensive fighters.

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☐ FEB/86	☐ SEP/90	☐ MAR/93	☐ MAY/99	☐ APR/02
☐ JUL/86	☐ OCT/90	☐ MAY/93	☐ JUN/99	☐ JUN/02
☐ OCT/86	☐ NOV/90	☐ JUN/95	☐ JUL/99	☐ AUG/02
☐ DEC/86	☐ DEC/90	☐ JUN/96	☐ AUG/99	☐ OCT/02
☐ FEB/87	☐ JAN/91	☐ SEP/96	☐ SEP/99	☐ DEC/02
☐ MAY/87	☐ FEB/91	☐ NOV/96	☐ OCT/99	☐ WIN/02
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☐ AUG/87	☐ MAY/91	☐ WIN/96	☐ DEC/99	☐ MAY/03
☐ OCT/87	☐ JUN/91	☐ JAN/97	☐ HOL/99	☐ JUL/03
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ALPHABET RATINGS

The Rankings of Boxing's Three International Governing Bodies

WBA RATINGS
(Ratings as of April 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
2. David Tua (NZ)
3. Hasim Rahman (USA)
4. John Ruiz (USA)
5. Mike Tyson (USA)
6. Evander Holyfield (USA)
7. Fres Oquendo (PR)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Faruq Saleem (USA)
10. Lamon Brewster (USA)
11. Joe Mesi (USA)
12. Juan Carlos Gomez (CUB)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Jean Marc Mormeck (FRA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Virgil Hill (USA)
4. O'Neil Bell (USA)
5. Luis Pineda (PAN)
6. Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
7. Valery Brudov (RUS)
8. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
9. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
10. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
11. Louis Azille (GUY)
12. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Mehdi Sahnoune (FRA)
1. Vacant
2. Lou Del Valle (USA)
3. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
4. Manuel Siaca (PR)
5. Bruno Girard (FRA)
6. David Telesco (USA)
7. Thomas Hansvoll (NOR)
8. George Jones (USA)
9. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
10. Montell Griffin (USA)
11. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
12. Jorge Castro (ARG)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
1. Antwun Echols (USA)
2. Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
3. Byron Mitchell (USA)
4. Mads Larsen (DEN)
5. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
6. Eric Lucas (CAN)
7. Danilo Haussler (GER)
8. Thomas Tate (USA)
9. Andre Thysse (SA)
10. Francisco Mora (ARG)
11. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
12. Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
Champ: William Joppy (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Bert Schenk (GER)
3. Robert Allen (USA)
4. Maselino Masoe (AUSTRL)
5. Howard Eastman (GB)
6. Evans Ashira (DEN)
7. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
8. Kingsley Ikeke (NIG)
9. Jermain Taylor (USA)
10. Satoru Suzuki (JAP)
11. Wayne Alexander (GB)
12. Derrell Coley (USA)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Oscar De La Hoya (USA)
Champ: Alejandro T. Garcia (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
3. Travis Simms (USA)
4. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
5. Shane Mosley (USA)
6. Santiago Samaniego (PAN)
7. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
8. J.C. Candelo (COL)
9. Michael Rask (DEN)
10. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
11. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
12. Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Ricardo Mayorga (CR)
1. Vacant
2. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
3. Michael Trabant (GER)
4. Jose Rivera (USA)
5. Vernon Forrest (USA)
6. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
7. Felix Flores (PR)
8. James Hare (GB)
9. Kermit Cintron (PR)
10. Andrew Lewis (GUY)
11. Farhad Bakirov (UZB)
12. Elio Ortiz (VEN)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
Champ: Vivian Harris (GUY)
1. Souleyman M'Baye (FRA)
2. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
3. Ricky Hatton (GB)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Diobelys Hurtado (CUB)
6. Arturo Gatti (USA)
7. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
8. Zab Judah (USA)
9. Miguel Cotto (PR)
10. Ener Julio (COL)
11. Randall Bailey (USA)
12. Masakazu Satake (JAP)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Leonard Dorin (CAN)
1. Miguel Callist (PAN)
2. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
3. Lakva Sim (MON)
4. Juan Lazcano (USA)
5. Steve Johnston (USA)
6. Phillip Ndou (SA)
7. Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)
8. Prawet Singwangcha (THAI)
9. Angel Manfredy (USA)
10. Diego Corrales (USA)
11. Orlando Salido (MEX)
12. Steve Quinonez (USA)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Acelino Freitas (BRA)
Champ: Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)
1. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
2. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
3. Daniel Attah (NIG)
4. Julio Pablo Chacon (ARG)
5. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
6. Jesus Chavez (MEX)
7. Randy Suico (PHIL)
8. Nobuhito Honmo (JAP)
9. Nate Campbell (USA)
10. Cassius Baloyi (SA)
11. Alex Arthur (GB)
12. Mike Anchondo (USA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Derrick Gainer (USA)
1. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
2. Daniel Seda (PR)
3. Naseem Hamed (GB)
4. Injin Chi (KOR)
5. Antonio Cermeno (VEN)
6. Chris John (IND)
7. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
8. Michael Brodie (GB)
9. Spend Abazi (DEN)
10. Victor Polo (COL)
11. William Abelyan (ARM)
12. Zahir Raheem (USA)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
1. Vacant
2. Yoddamrong Sithyodthong (THAI)
3. Somsak Sithchachawan (THAI)
4. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
5. Osamu Sato (JAP)
6. Yober Ortega (VEN)
7. Jose Rojas (VEN)
8. Paulie Ayala (USA)
9. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
10. Johnny Armour (GB)
11. Napapol Kiattisachokchai (THAI)
12. Mahyar Monshipour (FRA)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Johnny Bredahl (DEN)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Tim Austin (USA)
4. Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)
5. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
6. Leo Gamez (VEN)
7. Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)
8. Poongsawat Krachingdaen (THAI)
9. Diego Morales (MEX)
10. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
11. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
12. Moises Castro (NIC)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Alexander Munoz (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Sornpichai Pisnurachank (THAI)
3. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
4. Rogelio Galicia (PHIL)
5. Kohei Matsuura (JAP)
6. Luis Bolano (COL)
7. Jose Navarro (USA)
8. Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)
9. Hideyasu Ishihara (JAP)
10. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
11. Gabula Vabaza (SA)
12. Martin Castillo (MEX)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Eric Morel (USA)
1. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
2. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
3. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
4. Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)
5. Damaen Kelly (GB)
6. Brahim Asloum (FRA)
7. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
8. Isidro Garcia (MEX)
9. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
10. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
11. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
12. Brian Viloria (USA)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)
1. Vacant
2. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
3. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
4. Pichit C. Siriwat (THAI)
5. Edgar Velasquez (VEN)
6. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
7. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
8. Mhikiza Myekeni (SA)
9. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
10. Tatsuo Kayashida (JAP)
11. Alex Sanchez (PR)
12. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)

MINIMUMWEIGHTS
Champ: Noel Arambulet (VEN)
1. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
2. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
3. Daniel Reyes (COL)
4. Khulile Makeba (SA)
5. Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)
6. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
7. Yutaka Niida (JAP)
8. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
9. Eriberto Gijon (PHIL)
10. Pornsawan Pramuk (THAI)
11. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
12. Isaac Bustos (MEX)

WBC RATINGS
(Ratings as of May 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Lennox Lewis (GB)
1. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
2. Hasim Rahman (USA)
3. Mike Tyson (USA)
4. Evander Holyfield (USA)
5. David Tua (NZ)
6. Lamon Brewster (USA)
7. John Ruiz (USA)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Sinan Samil San (TUR)
10. Fres Oquendo (USA)
11. Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)
12. Jameel McCline (USA)
13. Danny Williams (GB)
14. Joe Mesi (USA)
15. Dominick Guinn (USA)
16. Juan Carlos Gomez (CUB)
17. Henry Akinwande (NIG)
18. Faruq Saleem (USA)
19. Jeremy Williams (USA)
20. Lou Savarese (USA)
21. Lance Whitaker (USA)
22. Frans Botha (SA)
23. Michael Grant (USA)
24. Larry Donald (USA)
25. Andre Purlette (GUY)
26. Dimitry Bakhtov (KAZ)
27. Clifford Etienne (USA)
28. DaVarryl Williamson (USA)
29. Cedric Boswell (USA)
30. Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
1. O'Neil Bell (USA)
2. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
3. Louis Azille (DR)
4. Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
5. Pietro Aurino (ITA)
6. Sebastiaan Rothmann (SA)
7. Luis Andres Pineda (PAN)
8. Alexander Petkovic (GER)
9. Rudiger May (GER)
10. Richard LaMontagne (USA)
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14. Rydell Booker (USA)
15. Krysztov Wlodarczyk (POL)
16. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
17. Glen Kelly (AUSTRL)
18. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
19. Turan Bagci (TUR)
20. Saul Montana (MEX)
21. Alain Simon (FRA)
22. Ezra Sellers (USA)
23. Felix Cora (USA)
24. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
25. Hugo Garay (ARG)
26. Mark Hobson (GB)
27. Kelvin Davis (USA)
28. Jorge Kahwagi (MEX)
29. Mohamed Ben Guesmia (ALG)
30. Vincenzo Rossitto (ITA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Antonio Tarver (USA)
1. Clinton Woods (GB)
2. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
3. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
4. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
5. Montell Griffin (USA)
6. Stipe Drews (CRO)
7. Kamel Amrane (FRA)
8. Jorge Castro (ARG)
9. Tomasz Adamek (POL)
10. Elvir Muriqi (ALB)
11. George Jones (USA)
12. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
13. Eric Harding (USA)
14. Orlando Rivera (PR)
15. Darren Corbett (IRE)
16. Derrick Harmon (USA)
17. Robert Stieglitz (GER)
18. Tony Oakey (GB)
19. Laudelino Barros (BRA)
20. Elvis Michailenko (LAT)
21. Madjid Zaim (FRA)
22. Michael Rush (USA)
23. Alejandro Lakatus (ROM)
24. Rodney Moore (USA)
25. Donnell Wiggins (USA)
26. Zsolt Erdei (HUN)
27. Rodney Toney (USA)
28. Ron Simms (USA)
29. Silvio Branco (ITA)
30. Jackson Chanet (FRA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Markus Beyer (GER)
1. Eric Lucas (CAN)
2. Danilo Haussler (GER)
3. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
4. Antwun Echols (USA)
5. Mads Larsen (DEN)
6. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
7. Yoshinori Nishizawa (JAP)
8. Andre Thysse (SA)
9. Charles Brewer (USA)
10. Danny Green (AUSTRL)
11. Henry Porras (CR)
12. Byron Mitchell (USA)
13. Jeff Lacy (USA)
14. Omar Sheika (USA)
15. Robin Reid (GB)
16. David Starie (GB)
17. Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)
18. Oscar Bravo (USA)
19. Kabary Salem (EGY)
20. Glenn Catley (GB)
21. Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
22. Dan Batchelder (USA)
23. Rudy Markussen (DEN)
24. Mario Veit (GER)
25. Brian Magee (GB)
26. Enrique Ornelas (USA)
27. James Lubwana (UGA)
28. Jean Paul Mendy (FRA)
29. Victor Oganov (RUS)
30. Charles Adamu (GHA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Howard Eastman (GB)
2. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
3. Robert Allen (USA)
4. Kuvanych Toygonbayev (UZB)
5. Wayne Alexander (GB)
6. Eric Mitchell (USA)
7. Aslan Kodzoev (RUS)
8. Evans Ashira (KEN)
9. Raymond Joval (HOL)
10. Sergey Tatevosyan (RUS)
11. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
12. Jermain Taylor (USA)
13. Quentin Smith (USA)
14. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
15. Sam Soliman (AUSTRL)
16. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
17. Tokutaro Toyozumi (JAP)
18. Jerry Elliott (NIG)
19. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
20. Jorge Sendra (SPA)
21. Bert Schenk (GER)
22. Tokunbo Olajide (CAN)
23. Alejandro Berrio (COL)
24. Satoru Suzuki (JAP)
25. Ruben Williams (USA)
26. Mariano Carrera (ARG)
27. Carl Daniels (USA)
28. Anthony Bonsante (USA)
29. Kingsley Ikeke (CAN)
30. James Obedi Toney (GHA)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Oscar De La Hoya (USA)
Interim Champ: Javier Castillejo (SPA)
1. Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)
2. Shane Mosley (USA)
3. Kassim Ouma (USA)
4. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
5. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
6. Michael Rask (DEN)
7. Richard Williams (GB)
8. Alex Bunema (USA)
9. Mihaly Kotai (HUN)
10. Christophe Canclaux (FRA)
11. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
12. Raul Marquez (USA)
13. Julio Garcia (CUB)
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WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Ricardo Mayorga (NIC)
1. Vernon Forrest (USA)
2. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
3. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
4. Alexander Vetoux (UKR)
5. Hiroshi Watanabe (JAP)
6. Manuel Gomez (MEX)
7. Rafael Pineda (COL)
8. Michel Trabant (GER)
9. Miguel Rodriguez (MEX)
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21. James Hare (GB)
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23. Sergio Martinez (ARG)
24. Ernesto Carmona (MEX)
25. Eduardo Bejarano (ARG)
26. Chris Smith (USA)
27. Christopher Henry (BAR)
28. Riad Menasria (ALG)
29. Freddy Hernandez (MEX)
30. Anthony Thompson (USA)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
2. Arturo Gatti (CAN)
3. Ricky Hatton (GB)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
6. Zab Judah (USA)
7. Omar Weis (ARG)
8. Miguel Cotto (PR)
9. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
10. James Leija (USA)
11. Jason Cook (GB)
12. Micky Ward (USA)
13. Hector Camacho Jr. (PR)
14. Eamonn Magee (GB)

15. Francisco Bojado (MEX)
16. Kelson Pinto (BRA)
17. Muhammad Abdullaev (UZB)
18. Juan Valenzuela (MEX)
19. Terrance Cauthen (USA)
20. Junior Witter (GB)
21. Ricardo Williams (USA)
22. Carlos Maussa (COL)
23. Diobelys Hurtado (CUB)
24. Soulemane M'Baye (FRA)
25. Cesar Bazan (MEX)
26. Victor Kpadenou (GHA)
27. Ricky Quiles (USA)
28. Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)
29. Carlos Mairena (NIC)
30. Ted Bami (GB)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Floyd Mayweather (USA)
1. Juan Lazcano (USA)
2. Steve Johnston (USA)
3. Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
4. Phillip Ndou (SA)
5. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
6. Kengo Nagashima (JAP)
7. Juan Diaz (MEX)
8. Julio Diaz (USA)
9. Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)
10. Aldo Rios (ARG)
11. Yuri Romanov (UKR)
12. Dennis Laurente (PHIL)
13. Stefano Zoff (ITA)
14. David Burke (GB)
15. Bobby Vanzie (GB)
16. Michael Clark (USA)
17. Juan Gomez Trinidad (PR)
18. Lamar Murphy (USA)
19. Colin Dunne (GB)
20. Steve Quinonez (USA)
21. Cristian Bejarano (MEX)
22. Mat Zegan (POL)
23. Alex Trujillo (PR)
24. Leavander Johnson (USA)
25. Eleazar Contreras (USA)
26. Steve Forbes (USA)
27. Sayan Sanchat (RUS)
28. Ricardo Silva (ARG)
29. Juliano Ramos (ARG)
30. Michele Delli Paoli (ITA)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)
1. Jesus Chavez (USA)
2. Mzonke Fana (SA)
3. Randy Suico (PHIL)
4. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
5. Affif Djelti (FRA)
6. Nobuto Honmo (JAP)
7. Julio Pablo Chacon (ARG)
8. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
9. Diego Corrales (USA)
10. Fernando Trejo (MEX)
11. Nate Campbell (USA)
12. Miguel Angel Huerta (MEX)
13. Mike Anchondo (USA)
14. Ryuhei Sugita (JAP)
15. Humberto Soto (MEX)
16. Daniel Attah (NIG)
17. Goyo Vargas (MEX)
18. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
19. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
20. Orlando Salido (MEX)
21. Boris Sinitsin (RUS)
22. Pedro Miranda (SPA)
23. Manuel Bocanegra (MEX)
24. Tiger Martinez (USA)
25. Yongsoo Choi (KOR)
26. Craig Docherty (GB)
27. Daniel Alicea (PR)
28. Alex Arthur (GB)
29. Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)
30. Steve Luevano (USA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Erik Morales (MEX)
1. Injin Chi (KOR)
2. Michael Brodie (GB)
3. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
4. William Abelyan (USA)
5. Manuel Calvo (SPA)
6. Luis Fuentes (MEX)
7. Spend Abazi (DEN)
8. Zahir Raheem (USA)
9. Rocky Juarez (USA)
10. Cyril Thomas (FRA)
11. Guty Espadas (MEX)
12. Juan Gerardo Cabrera (ARG)
13. Takalani Ndlovu (SA)
14. Angel Chacon (PR)
15. Hector Velazquez (MEX)
16. Hector Marquez (MEX)
17. Valdemir Pereira (BRA)
18. Wayne McCullough (IRE)
19. Fernando Velardez (MEX)
20. Vuyani Bungu (SA)
21. Yangsoo Sung (KOR)
22. George Priest Smalls (USA)
23. Dainoshin Kuma (JAP)
24. Eiichi Sugama (JAP)
25. Oscar Leon (COL)
26. Roberto Guerrero (USA)
27. David Murillo (MEX)
28. Choi Tseveenpurev (MON)
29. Gavin Rees (GB)
30. Ray Beltran (MEX)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Oscar Larios (MEX)
1. Kiattisak Chocchoi (THAI)
2. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
3. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
4. Paulie Ayala (USA)
5. Shigeru Nakazato (JAP)
6. Osamu Sato (JAP)
7. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
8. Willie Jorrin (USA)
9. Manabu Fukushima (JAP)
10. Akihiro Kanai (JAP)
11. Mahyar Monshipour (FRA)
12. Emmanuel Lucero (USA)
13. Jose Rojas (VEN)
14. Junichi Watanabe (JAP)
15. David Donis (USA)
16. Marcos Licona (MEX)
17. Hector Julio Avila (DR)
18. Yoshikane Nakajima (JAP)
19. Jilrex Jaca (PHIL)
20. Art Simonyan (USA)
21. Celestino Caballero (PAN)
22. Masakazu Sugawara (JAP)
23. Jose Luis Valbuena (VEN)
24. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
25. Vincenzo Gigliotti (ITA)
26. Pastor Maurin (ARG)
27. Alejandro Barrera (MEX)
28. Andres Cabrera (MEX)
29. Martin Honorio (MEX)
30. Sergio Medina (ARG)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)
1. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
2. Diego Morales (MEX)
3. Genaro Garcia (USA)
4. Noel Wilders (GB)
5. Hozumi Hasegawa (JAP)
6. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
7. David Guerault (FRA)
8. Julio Zarate (MEX)
9. Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)
10. Jhonny Gonzalez (MEX)
11. Tim Austin (USA)
12. Gerardo Martinez (MEX)
13. Jesus Perez (COL)
14. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)
15. Daniel Ponce (MEX)
16. Jess Maca (PHIL)
17. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
18. Moises Castro (NIC)
19. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
20. Sasha Baktin (RUS)
21. Steve Molitor (CAN)
22. Jorge Lacierva (MEX)
23. Rogelio Galicia (PHIL)
24. Julio Cesar Avila (MEX)
25. Miguel Angel Munguia (MEX)
26. Julio Gamboa (NIC)
27. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
28. Silence Mabuza (SA)
29. Nicky Booth (GB)
30. Jairo Tagliaferro (VEN)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Masamori Tokuyama (JAP)
1. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
2. Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)
3. Luis Bolano (COL)
4. Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)
5. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
6. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
7. Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)
8. Jose Beranza (MEX)
9. Hideyasu Ishihara (JAP)
10. Martin Castillo (MEX)
11. Peter Culshaw (GB)
12. Jose Navarro (USA)
13. Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)
14. Felix Machado (VEN)
15. Masaki Kawabata (JAP)
16. Oscar Andrade (MEX)
17. Ricardo Cordoba (PAN)
18. Shin Ogata (JAP)
19. Karim Quibir (SPA)
20. Erick Lopez (MEX)
21. Lunga Ntontela (SA)
22. Cuauhtemoc Vargas (MEX)
23. Kohei Matsuura (JAP)
24. Theo Modise (SA)
25. Masayuki Arinaga (JAP)
26. Eiji Kojima (JAP)
27. Neddy Garcia (USA)
28. Eduardo Pacheco (COL)
29. Cesar Lopez (USA)
30. Cyril Bellanger (FRA)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)
1. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
2. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
3. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
4. Luis Maldonado (MEX)
5. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
6. Brian Viloria (USA)
7. Noriyuki Komatsu (JAP)
8. Damaen Kelly (GB)
9. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
10. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
11. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
12. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
13. Jair Jimenez (COL)
14. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
15. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
16. Koji Koyama (JAP)
17. Steffen Norskov (DEN)
18. Brahim Asloum (FRA)
19. Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)
20. Daisuke Naito (JAP)
21. Yusuke Morishima (JAP)
22. Mimoun Chent (FRA)
23. Ivan Hernandez (MEX)
24. Carlos Bouchan (MEX)
25. Jose Araiza (MEX)
26. Julio Ler (ARG)
27. Jose Lopez Bueno (SPA)
28. Jason Booth (GB)
29. Glenn Donaire (PHIL)
30. Sherwin Paro (PHIL)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Jorge Arce (MEX)
1. Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)
2. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
3. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
4. Yosam Choi (KOR)
5. Tatsuo Hayashida (JAP)
6. Manuel Vargas (MEX)
7. Roberto Vazquez (PAN)
8. Monelisi Myekeni (SA)
9. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)
10. Masato Hatakeyama (JAP)
11. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
12. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
13. Jesus Martinez (MEX)
14. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
15. Armand De La Cruz (PHIL)
16. Rafael Lozano (SPA)
17. Hugo Cazares (MEX)
18. Juan Centeno (NIC)
19. Steve Msimango (SA)
20. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
21. Sarikalek O. Eakarin (THAI)
22. Nerys Espinoza (NIC)
23. Andrea Sarritzu (ITA)
24. Ernesto Castro (NIC)
25. Jun Kitano (JAP)
26. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
27. Carlos Fajardo (NIC)
28. Angelo Dottin (PAN)
29. Edgar Sosa (MEX)
30. Bert Batawang (PHIL)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Champ: Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)
1. Isaac Bustos (MEX)
2. Eagle Okuda (JAP)
3. Heriberto Gijon (PHIL)
4. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
5. Khulile Makeba (SA)
6. Satoshi Kogumasaka (JAP)
7. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
8. Mohamed Rachman (INDO)
9. Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)
10. Juan Palacios (NIC)
11. Sithembele Kibiti (SA)
12. Hiroyuki Abe (JAP)
13. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
14. Oledong Sithsanerchai (THAI)
15. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
16. Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)
17. Ki-Moon Na (KOR)
18. Yutaka Niida (JAP)
19. Ulises Solis (MEX)
20. Eduardo Marquez (NIC)
21. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
22. Juan Alfonso Keb Baas (MEX)
23. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
24. Makoto Suzuki (JAP)
25. Sizwe Sinyabi (SA)
26. Omar Soto (MEX)
27. Namchai Ratanachaigym (THAI)
28. Pornsawan Porpramook (THAI)
29. Teruo Misawa (JAP)
30. Juan Landaeta (VEN)

IBF RATINGS
(Ratings as of June 2003)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Chris Byrd (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Fres Oquendo (USA)
3. David Tua (NZ)
4. Hasim Rahman (USA)
5. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
6. John Ruiz (USA)
7. Evander Holyfield (USA)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Mike Tyson (USA)
10. Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)
11. Lamon Brewster (USA)
12. Eliecer Castillo (CUB)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: James Toney (USA)
1. O'Neil Bell (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Virgil Hill (USA)
4. Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
5. Ezra Sellers (USA)
6. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
7. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
8. Kelvin Davis (USA)
9. Alex Petkovic (RUS)
10. Louis Azille (USA)
11. Dale Brown (CAN)
12. Kenny Keene (USA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Antonio Tarver (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
4. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
5. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
6. Clinton Woods (GB)
7. Montell Griffin (USA)
8. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
9. George Jones (USA)
10. Jorge Castro (ARG)
11. Stipe Drews (CRO)
12. Eric Harding (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
1. Vacant
2. Danilo Haussler (GER)
3. Mads Larsen (DEN)
4. Charles Brewer (USA)
5. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
6. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
7. Antwun Echols (USA)
8. Byron Mitchell (USA)
9. Mario Veit (GER)
10. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
11. Danny Green (AUSTRL)
12. Jeff Lacy (USA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Robert Allen (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Howard Eastman (GB)
4. Bert Schenk (GER)
5. Raymond Joval (HOL)
6. Evans Ashira (GUY)
7. Jermain Taylor (USA)
8. Bea Diallo (LIB)
9. Derrell Coley (USA)
10. Aaron Mitchell (USA)
11. Sam Soliman (AUSTRL)
12. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Winky Wright (USA)
1. Kassim Ouma (USA)
2. Vacant
3. J.C. Candelo (USA)
4. Emmett Linton (USA)
5. Verno Phillips (USA)
6. Shane Mosley (USA)
7. Angel Hernandez (USA)
8. Alex Bunema (USA)
9. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
10. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
11. Travis Simms (USA)
12. Julio Garcia (USA)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Cory Spinks (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
4. Vernon Forrest (USA)
5. James Hare (ENG)
6. Rafael Pineda (COL)
7. Jose Celaya (USA)
8. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
9. Michele Trabant (GER)
10. Christian Bladt (DEN)
11. Kermit Cintron (USA)
12. Hector Quiroz (USA)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
4. Omar Weis (ARG)
5. Arturo Gatti (USA)
6. James Leija (USA)
7. Zab Judah (USA)
8. Miguel Cotto (USA)
9. Mike Stewart (USA)
10. Emanuel Augustus (USA)
11. Ben Tackie (GHA)
12. Lovemore Ndou (AUSTRL)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Paul Spadafora (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Levander Johnson (USA)
3. Angel Manfredy (USA)
4. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
5. Juan Gomez Trinidad (PR)
6. Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
7. Juan Lazcano (USA)
8. Steve Johnston (USA)
9. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
10. Julio Diaz (USA)
11. Michael Clark (USA)
12. Victoriano Sosa (DR)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Carlos Hernandez (USA)
1. Steve Forbes
2. Vacant
3. Joel Casamayor (USA)
4. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
5. Jesus Chavez (USA)
6. David Santos (USA)
7. Orlando Salido (MEX)
8. Phillip Ndou (SA)
9. Nate Campbell (USA)
10. Diego Corrales (USA)
11. Edelmiro Martinez (USA)
12. Alex Arthur (GB)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. William Abelyan (USA)
5. Manuel Medina (MEX)
6. Oscar Leon (PR)
7. Michael Brodie (ENG)
8. In Jin Chi (KOR)
9. Victor Polo (COL)
10. Rocky Juarez (USA)
11. Zahir Raheem (USA)
12. Guty Espadas (MEX)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Jose Luis Valbuena (ARG)
4. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
5. Paulie Ayala (USA)
6. David Donis (USA)
7. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
8. F. Rakkiatgym (THAI)
9. Fernando Velardez (USA)
10. Emmanuel Lucero (USA)
11. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
12. Diego Morales (MEX)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Rafael Marquez (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Tim Austin (USA)
3. Pete Frissina (USA)
4. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
5. Jesus Perez (COL)
6. Roger Gonzalez (USA)
7. Genaro Garcia (MEX)
8. David Guerault (FRA)
9. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
10. Jose Aguiniga (USA)
11. Fahsung 3K Battery (THAI)
12. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Luis Perez (NIC)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Felix Machado (VEN)
4. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
5. Luis Bolano (COL)
6. Martin Castillo (MEX)
7. Peter Culshaw (ENG)
8. Vernie Torres (USA)
9. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
10. Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)
11. Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)
12. Adonis Rivas (NIC)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Irene Pacheco (COL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Hussein Hussein (LEB)
4. Damaen Kelly (GB)
5. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
6. Vic Darchinian (AUSTRL)
7. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
8. Jair Jimenez (COL)
9. Wandee Chareon (THAI)
10. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
11. Isidro Garcia (MEX)
12. Masaki Kawabata (JAP)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Jose Burgos (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Fahlan Sakreerin (THAI)
4. Alexander Sanchez (PR)
5. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
6. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
7. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
8. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
9. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)
10. Tatsuo Hatashida (JAP)
11. Kermin Guardia(COL)
12. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)

MINI FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Edgar Cardenas (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Daniel Reyes (COL)
4. Muhammad Rachman (INDO)
5. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
6. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
7. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
8. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
9. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
10. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
11. Kermin Guardia (COL)
12. Jaewon Kim (KOR)

CLASSIC

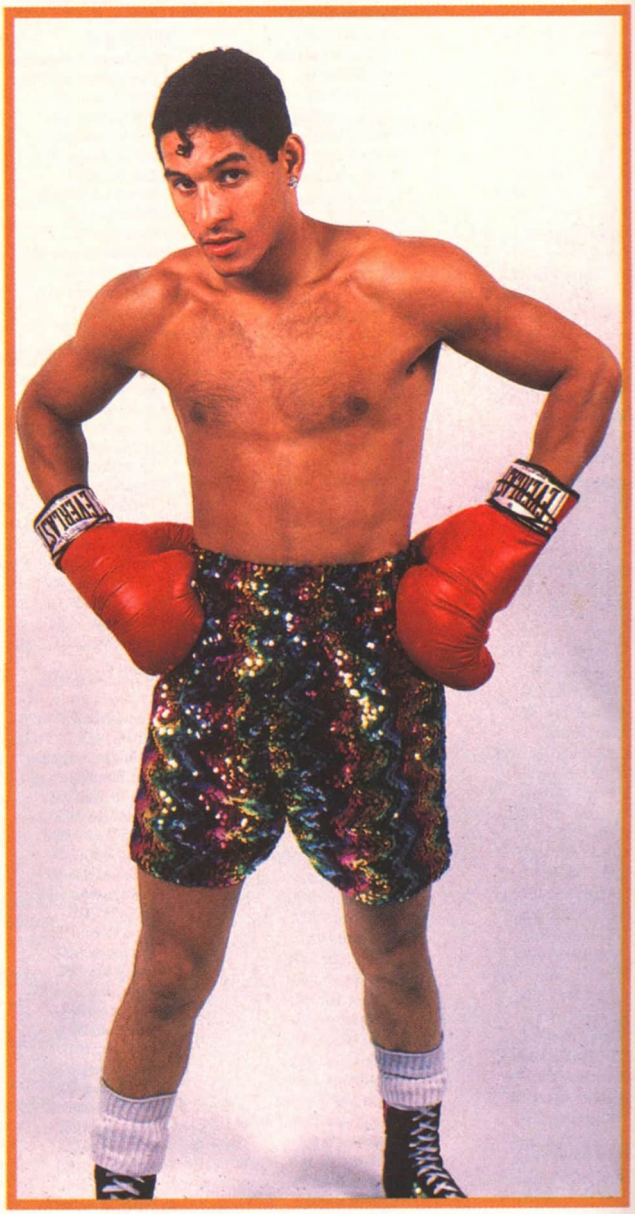
From THE RING, October 1985

THE "MACHO MAN" RIDES AGAIN

The Sky's The Limit Following Camacho's Dazzling Victory Over Ramirez

By Jack Welsh

(Editor's Note: This is a condensed version.)

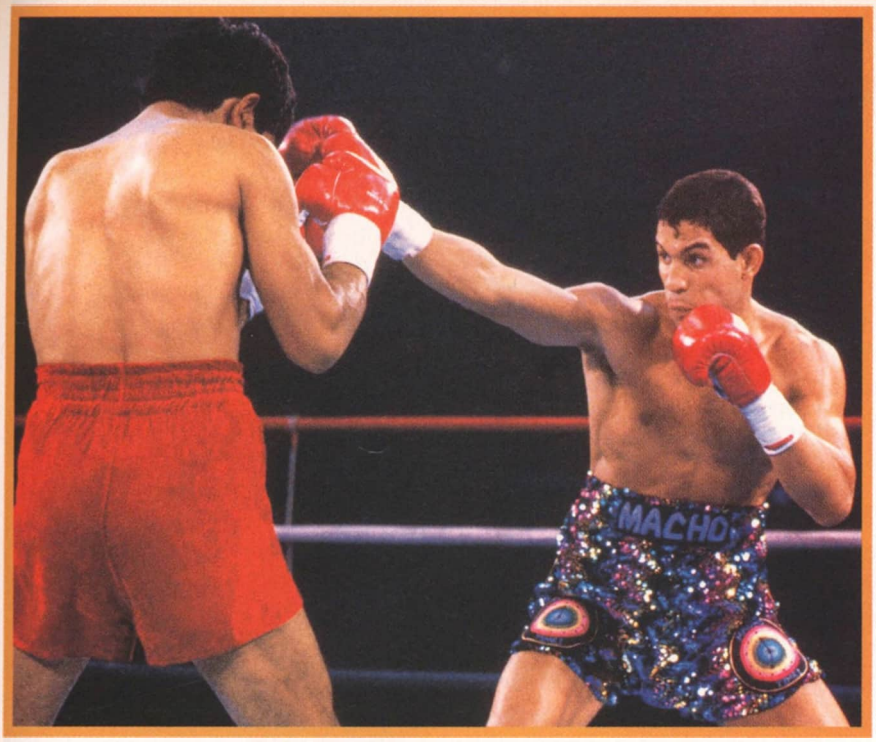


With the kind of fleetness The Man Upstairs bestowed on Hector Camacho, you wonder why the recycled juvenile delinquent ever wasted his time stealing cars in New York's Spanish Harlem.

The now legalized fistfighter was only 15 at the time, and after a handful of probations, which never stirred the id of Camacho's basic morality, there wasn't a legal beagle left in Fun City who could make the even most patient judge believe that Camacho's repeated exercises were "only a teenager's mischievous game."

When the judge's gavel finally fell on Camacho, it brought him 3½ months in dreary Rikers Island for grand theft. It was the culmination of court action that originated when police apprehended Camacho in a Pinto after a 30-block chase through Manhattan.

Despite winning the first of three Golden Gloves titles and being the father of a newborn son, this handsome young man, who first touched New York soil as a three-year-old when his family departed Bayamon, Puerto Rico, really never understood those clever hands were meant for something more noble than hot-wiring somebody else's transportation. Just how the motivation for reform surfaced isn't quite clear, but Camacho got some kind of message in his unpredictable head one afternoon when an inmate, having seen him box, said: "With what you can do, what the hell are you doing in here?"



Camacho used a good, consistent jab to defeat Jose Luis Ramirez and secure the WBC lightweight title belt. It was a sight repeated throughout a one-sided fight.

Since then, Camacho's superb fistic skills have taken him much farther than any purloined vehicle from the environs of Lexington Avenue. Today, as this irrepressible man-child describes it, "The Macho Man" is legit—in and out of the ring.

Yet in the days approaching his spectacular mesmerizing of Mexico's Jose Luis Ramirez last August at the Riviera hotel-casino in Las Vegas, the newly crowned WBC lightweight titlist did not lose that disarming smile of his when reflecting on the hyper moods that were to finally land him in the slammer.

"It was my way of having fun," Camacho said. "If I stole a car, in my mind I was borrowing it. It was just a part of a game, I'm young ... 15 or 16, see? I'm having fun. Can I get away with it or not, a game, right?

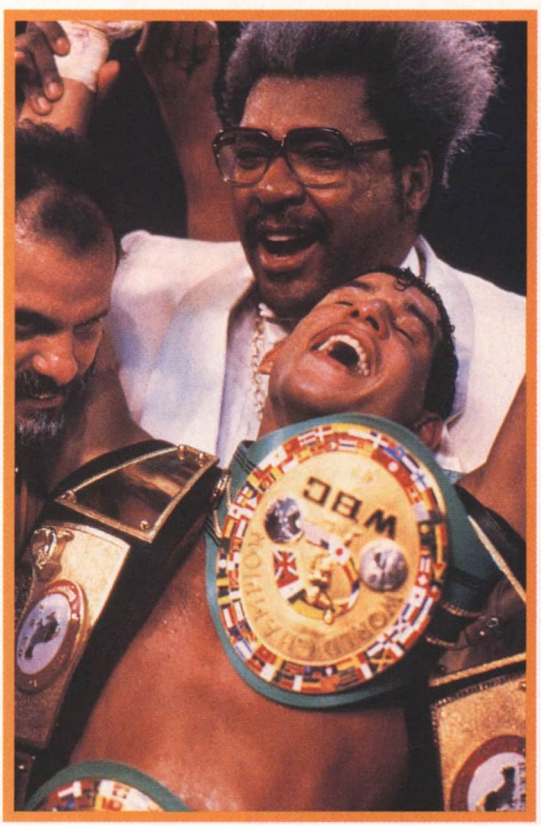
"We only took the very best cars. If anybody asked me about it, I said they belonged to my uncle. We took good care of them too, washing and buffing them before returning them. There was a story that we always filled them up with gas before returning them, but that part is exaggerated. I think somebody started it because I once filled up a car with gas and drove off without paying for it. There was a time when we once tried to steal a car that had a flat tire. That never happened again."

Before, during, and after his strike-and-vanish performance over the 26-year-old Ramirez for his second title, Camacho used every ploy in the book—and some yet to be recorded—to substantiate it was Macho Time. With Muhammad Ali now a legend of glowing memories and Sugar Ray Leonard only touching the sport with television commentary, the never-beaten Camacho just might be the bigger-than-life personality to take over boxing's international box office. Sure, Marvelous Marvin Hagler is still front and center, but the undisputed middleweight champion has never been a gimmick guy. And we all know how TV loves that extra dash and flash.

The Riviera hotel-casino's SuperStar Center on the strip was indeed the proper venue to display Camacho's aptitude for the outrageous. The 135-pound dynamo left his imprint as a young man who has no peer in any division for bedazzling foe and fan alike. An international assembly of 6,000 watched Camacho make good on most promises, despite missing his 17th knockout while extending his victory string to 28 straight.

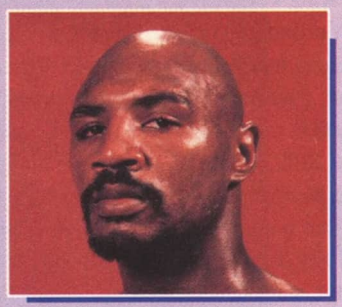
Super-hyped in and out of the ring, Camacho beat a loud drum for promoter Don King's well-anointed "El Momento De La Verdad" (The Moment Of Truth). Camacho reportedly earned $500,000 in his latest ascension to a boxing throne, $100,000 more than Ramirez' guaranteed purse. Still, it was the richest in the unflappable Mexican's 12-year pro career, a venture that brought him 50 pesos ($4.20) for his 1973 debut in the province of Sonora. Yet the way King, resplendent in all-white duds, was wringing his hands and gurgling "Macho Time," a seven-figure demand by Camacho and his connections may not be unreasonable in the coming months.

Admittedly, there was a time after winning the WBC super featherweight crown from a fading Rafael "Bazooka" Limon in 1983 that Camacho became disenchanted with the politics and chicanery of the business. A running feud and ultimate break with Billy Giles, the only manager/trainer he had known going back to his amateur days, also hampered Macho's rise. There were some anxious moments when it appeared despondency might kayo the usually fiery Latin. Camacho also had trouble



Camacho beat a loud drum for Don King's card. "The Macho Main" drew 6,000 fans to the Riviera hotel-casino's SuperStar Center and earned a career-high $500,000 for his efforts.

THE RING RATINGS, October 1985



Marvin Hagler

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Larry Holmes, Easton, PA
1. **Pinklon Thomas,** Wyncotte, PA
2. **Tim Witherspoon,** Philadelphia, PA
3. **Tony Tubbs,** Cincinnati, OH
4. **Greg Page,** Lousville, KY
5. **Gerrie Coetzee,** South Africa
6. **Trevor Berbick,** Canada
7. **Mike Weaver,** Diamond Bar, CA
8. **Carl Williams,** New York, NY
9. **Michael Dokes,** Akron, OH
10. **David Bey,** Philadelphia, PA

CRUISERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Alfonzo Ratliff, Chicago, IL
1. **Dwight Muhammad Qawi,** Camden, NJ
2. **Carlos "Sugar" DeLeon,** Puerto Rico
3. **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad,** Brooklyn, NY
4. **Piet Crous,** South Africa
5. **Osvaldo Ocasio,** Puerto Rico
6. **Lee Roy Murphy,** Chicago, IL
7. **Bashiru Ali,** Oakland, CA
8. **John Odhlambo,** Uganda
9. **Anthony Davis,** Las Vegas, NV
10. **Rickey Parkey,** Atlantic City, NJ

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Michael Spinks, St. Louis, MO
1. **Marvin Johnson,** Indianapolis, IN
2. **Prince Mama Mohammad,** Ghana
3. **Eddie Davis,** Freeport, NY
4. **Willie Edwards,** Detroit, MI
5. **Jean-Marie Emebe,** Cameroon
6. **Fulgencio Obelmejias,** Venezuela
7. **Jim McDonald,** Fort Worth, TX
8. **J.B. Williamson,** Inglewood, CA
9. **Bobby Czyz,** Wanaque, NJ
10. **Dennis Andries,** England

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Marvin Hagler, Brockton, MA
1. **John Mugabi,** Uganda
2. **James Shuler,** Philadelphia, PA
3. **James Kinchen,** San Diego, CA
4. **Don Lee,** Gary, IN
5. **Doug DeWitt,** Yonkers, NY
6. **Mustafa Hamsho,** Syria
7. **Tony Sibson,** England
8. **Dwight Davison,** Detroit, MI
9. **Curtis Parker,** Philadelphia, PA
10. **Herol Graham,** England

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Thomas Hearns, Detroit, MI
1. **John Mugabi,** Uganda
2. **Mike McCallum,** New York, NY
3. **Carlos Santos,** Puerto Rico
4. **Davey Moore,** Bronx, NY
5. **Mark Medal,** Jersey City, NJ
6. **Buster Drayton,** Philadelphia, PA
7. **Julian Jackson,** Virgin Islands
8. **Donald Curry,** Fort Worth, TX
9. **David Braxton,** Detroit, MI
10. **Matthew Hilton,** Canada

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Donald Curry,** Fort Worth, TX
2. **Milton McCrory,** Detroit, MI
3. **Tommy Ayers,** Cincinnati, OH
4. **Maurice Blocker,** Washington, D.C.
5. **Simon Brown,** Washington, D.C.
6. **Colin Jones,** Wales
7. **Sylvester Mittee,** England
8. **Lloyd Honeyghan,** England
9. **Jerome Kinney,** Highland Park, MI
10. **Johnny Bumphus,** Clementon, NJ

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Aaron Pryor,** Cincinnati, OH
2. **Bill Costello,** Kingston, NY
3. **Ubaldo Sacco,** Argentina
4. **Ronnie Shields,** Port Arthur, TX
5. **Gene Hatcher,** Fort Worth, TX
6. **Leroy Haley,** Las Vegas, NV
7. **Patrizio Oliva,** Italy
8. **Rene Arredondo,** Mexico
9. **Terry Marsh,** England
10. **Rodolfo (Gato) Gonzalez,** Mexico

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Livingstone Bramble,** Passaic, NJ
2. **Hector Camacho,** New York, NY
3. **Jimmy Paul,** Detroit, MI
4. **Tyrone Crawley,** Philadelphia, PA
5. **Jose Luis Ramirez,** Mexico
6. **Edwin Rosario,** Puerto Rico
7. **Harry Arroyo,** Youngstown, OH
8. **Darryl Tyson,** Washington, D.C.
9. **Ray Mancini,** Youngstown, OH
10. **Cornelius Boza-Edwards,** Uganda

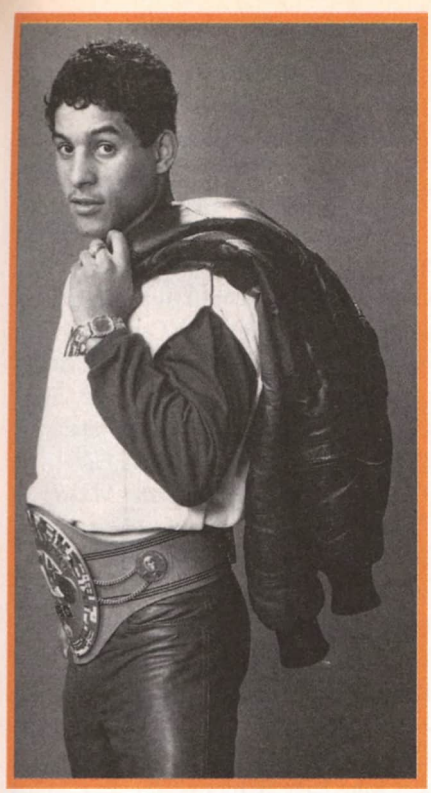
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Wilfredo Gomez, Puerto Rico
1. **Julio Cesar Chavez,** Mexico
2. **Rocky Lockridge,** Maple Shade, NJ
3. **Mario Martinez,** Mexico
4. **Rafael Solis,** Puerto Rico
5. **Alfredo Layne,** Panama
6. **Roger Mayweather,** Las Vegas, NV
7. **Pat Cowdell,** England
8. **Kenny Baysmore,** Washington, D.C.
9. **Dwight Pratchett,** Gary, IN
10. **Francisco Tomas Cruz,** Brazil

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Barry McGuigan, Ireland
1. **Azumah Nelson,** Ghana
2. **Eusebio Pedroza,** Panama
3. **Juan LaPorte,** Puerto Rico
4. **Marcos Villasana,** Mexico
5. **Jackie Beard,** Detroit, MI
6. **Bernard Taylor,** Knoxville, TN
7. **Johnny de la Rosa,** Miami, FL
8. **Min-Keun Oh,** Korea
9. **Calvin Grove,** Pottstown, PA
10. **Adrian Arreola,** Los Angeles, CA

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Victor Callejas,** Puerto Rico
2. **Juan (Kid) Meza,** Los Angeles, CA
3. **Loris Stecca,** Italy
4. **Jaime Garza,** Los Angeles, CA
5. **Greg Richardson,** Youngstown, OH
6. **Julian Solis,** Puerto Rico
7. **Jorge Ramirez,** Los Angeles, CA
8. **Oscar Muniz,** Los Angeles, CA
9. **Mike Ayala,** San Antonio, TX
10. **Seung-Hoon Lee,** Korea

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Richard Sandoval, Los Angeles, CA
1. **Jiro Watanabe,** Japan
2. **Miguel Lora,** Colombia
3. **Khaosai Galaxy,** Thailand
4. **Gaby Canizales,** Laredo, TX
5. **Daniel Zaragoza,** Mexico
6. **Freddie Jackson,** Houston, TX
7. **Rafael Orono,** Venezuela
8. **Jerome Coffee,** Nashville, TN
9. **James Pipps,** Vidor, TX
10. **Enrique Sanchez,** Dominican Republic

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Sot Chitalada, Thailand
1. **Jung-Koo Chang,** Korea
2. **Gabriel Bernal,** Mexico
3. **Sugar Baby Rojas,** Miami, FL
4. **Joey Olivo,** Los Angeles, CA
5. **Hilario Zapata,** Panama
6. **Alonzo Gonzalez,** Los Angeles, CA
7. **Candido Tellez,** Mexico
8. **Jose DeJesus,** Puerto Rico
9. **Dodie Penalosa,** Philippines
10. **Francisco Quiroz,** Dominican Republic



Regardless of whether he's in or out of the ring, Camacho is always decked out in flashy outfits. In a way, it has been his flamboyant personality as much as his fighting ability that has turned "The Macho Man" into a major attraction.

making the 130-pound limit and finally gave up the crown after one defense. When Camacho looked across the ring at Ramirez, it was only his sixth bout in two years.

Fortunately, the well-traveled Jimmy Montoya of Los Angeles took control of Camacho's career 10 months ago. It proved a bona fide Latin Connection of harmony and respect where the horizon is now unlimited in rewards for both parties. The 45-year-old Montoya, preparing his charge first in New York and later at his own gym in Bell, California, unquestionably had Camacho in the best condition of his career. The fight plan called for non-stop movement against a gutty tortoise out of Culiacan, Mexico, named Ramirez, whose plodding, if unrelenting, style cost him a fifth loss in a 90-5 (74) career.

When the stoic Ramirez was never able to hit the darting, weaving Camacho twice with the same punch, it was a defect that not only made Camacho a double titlist, but also gave Montoya three titleholders under his command, along with undefeated WBC bantamweight king Richie Sandoval and WBC junior featherweight champ Juan "Kid" Meza. Montoya, who can be as verbally explosive as his fighter, had confidence in Camacho.

The salvo that sent Ramirez to his knees in the third round also created a bloody nose that continued to drip until the final punch of the night.

"There was never a situation where we had to alter our attack," Montoya said. "Make no mistake, Hector Camacho is the fastest boxer in the world, bar none, and he's going to get better and better. Anybody who thought Camacho couldn't do that against a seasoned pro like Ramirez, who we never took lightly, has another think coming."

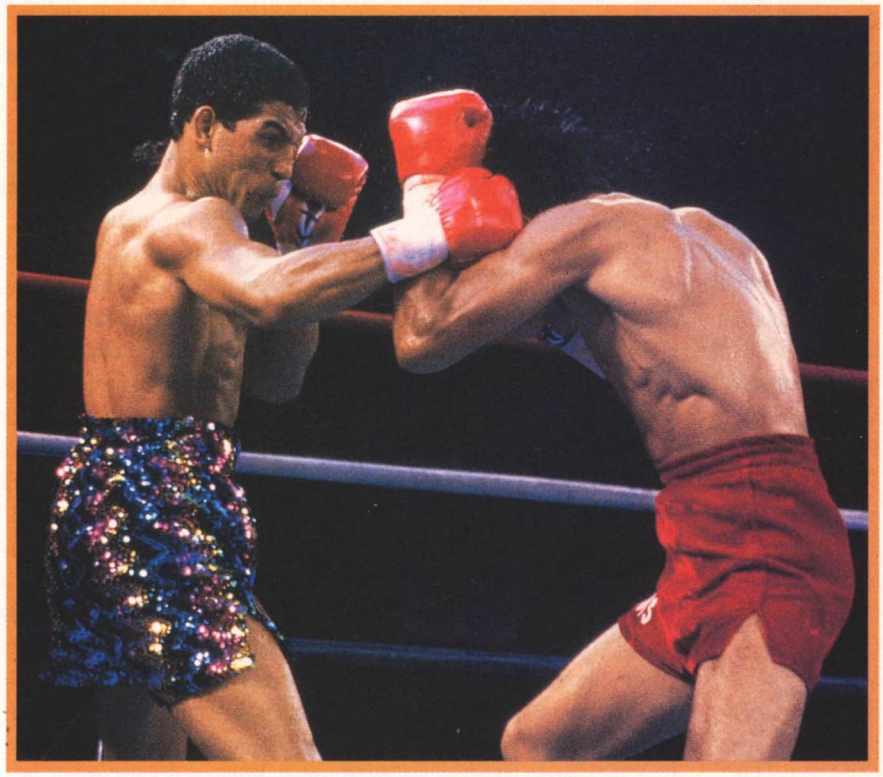
The cardinal sin that ended Ramirez' mini-reign of 10 months was the frustrating fact he could never match Camacho's lightning in any category. Like his connections (trainer Ramon Felix and adviser-interpreter Ernesto Fuentes), the defending champion was confident Camacho's fantastic speed would not be a serious problem.

Ramirez, a notorious slow starter, was certainly equal to Camacho in condition, weighing 134¾ to the challenger's 134. And with few exceptions, he seldom took a backward step in his patented stalking of the tormenting blur that was the Macho Man. But at no time did he land the kind of left hooks that dropped Alexis Arguello twice at Miami, where Ramirez lost a controversial 10-round split decision on November 14, 1980. And he certainly never exploded the arsenal that exposed Edwin Rosario's chin as suspect.

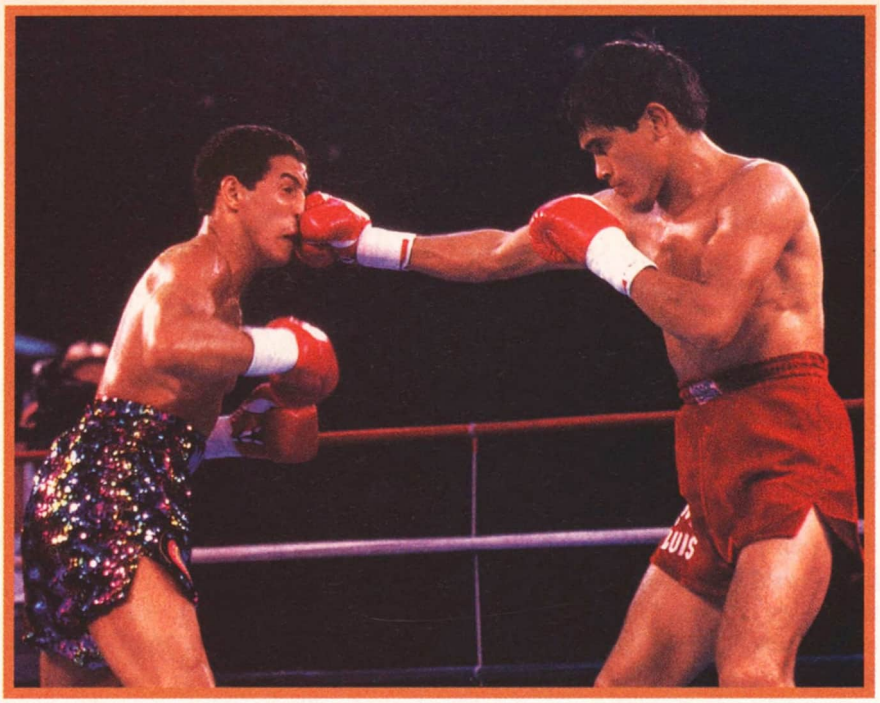
Of course, Rosario, on a roll of 23 straight, was right there in front of Ramirez, trapped in a corner. Never Camacho. The game's newest Will 'O the Wisp maintained lateral movement throughout, going left to right, right to left, and even punching while backing up. Although many of Camacho's flurries were an inch short, or slapped away by Ramirez, the ratio in the exchanges of punches was still two to one in Camacho's favor.

Camacho showed respect for his opponent's vaunted punch, but added to Ramirez' aggravation by absolutely refusing to stand still for any toe-to-toe confrontation. Ramirez made one other gross miscalculation on Camacho. He and his strategists figured the king of hype would certainly wilt after "seven or eight rounds of a torrid pace." They were right about the pace, wrong about the wilting.

"Camacho was too good for me tonight, just too fast. I couldn't catch him," said a disappointed Ramirez a day after missing the



Camacho's fight plan called for non-stop movement, which the plodding Ramirez could not handle. "Make no mistake, Hector Camacho is the fastest boxer in the world, bar none, and he's going to get better and better," said Camacho's trainer, Jimmy Montoya.



Ramirez connected on a few occasions, but was never able to get off the vaunted left hook that dropped Alexis Arguello twice in their 1980 bout in Miami.

postfight media session. "I'm sorry I hurt my wrist in the second round, because it would have been a better fight. I had to change my style because it hurt when I tried to punch. I figured I have to chase Camacho through the early rounds, but not the whole fight.

"Camacho is the fastest fighter I've ever seen and he was a lot smarter than I expected. With the exception of Ruben Olivares (who stopped Ramirez in three rounds in 1978), Hector is the best fighter I've ever faced."

Ramirez wore a heavy bandage on his left wrist before catching the flight to his home in Culiacan, where he lives with his wife and three children.

Camacho had made it clear he has little regard for the rules of the ring, and would try to get away "with whatever the referee lets me because nothing is going to keep that title away from me."

But referee Mills Lane, a district attorney in Washoe County (Reno), probably had an easier time than expected, considering Camacho's reputation for grabbing and clutching an enemy torso. Mills did warn Camacho three times—in the third, eighth, and ninth rounds—for grabbing Ramirez behind the head, but later explained "no points were deducted because Hector didn't pull his head down and immediately let go on my command."

Amazingly, neither fighter was cut around the eyes, even though their heads collided three times despite Camacho's constant lateral retreats in refusing to let Ramirez trap him on the ropes. Unfortunately, Camacho dominated so thoroughly in establishing pace and punch, each succeeding round was a carbon copy of the last, prompting many ringsiders to rate the production "boring."

Though he never came close to decking Ramirez after the third-round fireworks, Camacho did light the crowd's ire in the 11th round when the fighters collided at mid-ring and Ramirez boomeranged off, landing heavily on his back.

Other than national loyalty, Mexican fans had little to cheer about, but the intense Ramirez did rouse them in the ninth, 10th, and 11th rounds when he caught Camacho with several snapping rights that made the wide-eyed Puerto Rican pinion the champion's arms in an octopus-like clamp. Despite his ravings and rantings, Camacho seemed to have an honest respect for Ramirez, who was his twin in height at 5'6".

"Ramirez was the champion, so he could predict and say anything he wanted about pressuring me and cutting the ring off," Camacho said with a smile. "But I knew I was going to dominate the fight in every round. However, Ramirez is very strong and very calm. He kept coming back.

"Jose never hit me twice with the same punch, but he did land some good shots. He got me with a bodyshot ... I don't remember the round because it hurt. Yes, he was strong, but I knew I hurt him more than just the knockdown because I saw his eyes blinking with that hard jab I had."

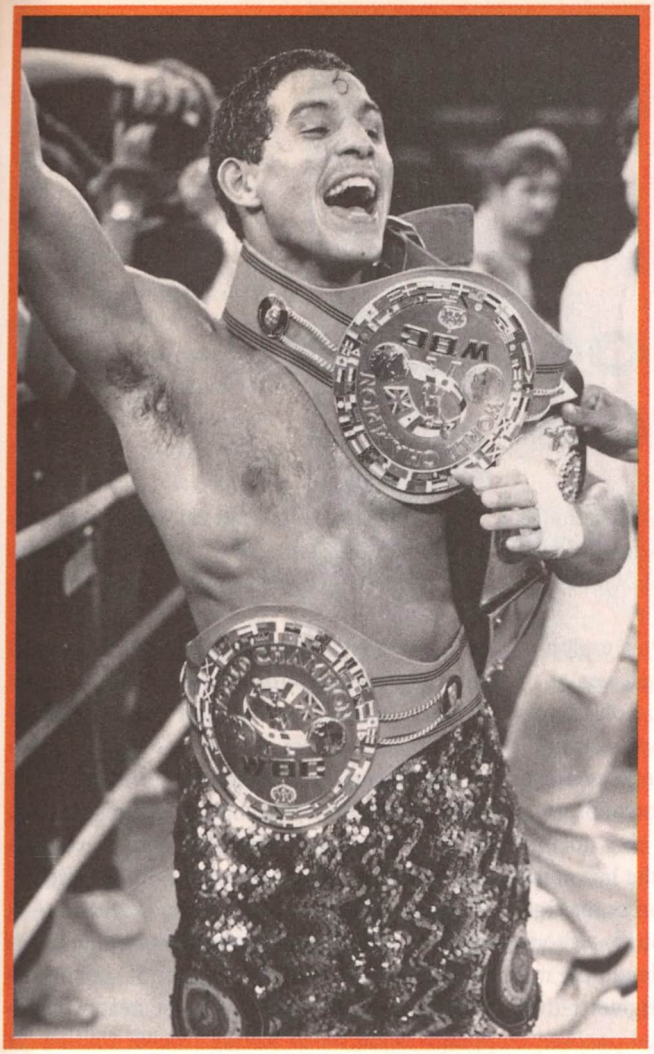
It was an easy assignment for the international panel of judges. England's Harry Gibbs and Mike Jacobs had it 118-111 and 119-109, respectively, for Camacho, while Newton Campos of Brazil made it unanimous with a 119-112 tally. Incredibly, Campos called the fifth, eighth, ninth, and 10th rounds even. THE RING's ballot was 118-111 for the new champion.

Had not Camacho's assortment of jabs, hooks, and uppercuts left Ramirez punching at air, the innovative challenger might have blinded the champion with his prefight attire, an ensemble that would make Liberace seem ultra-conservative. Trying to hide a smile as he entered the ring, Camacho spun out of a sequined red, white, and blue cape depicting the flag of his native Caribbean Island home, revealing a second iridescent rainbow-hued sequined robe. Absolutely no fighter in history was ever draped in such splendor, replete with matching sequined shoes.

Mega-bucks are rising on the horizon, and Camacho and Montoya don't want a single one to get away. Long before you stumbled onto this communique, we've probably read where New York Mayor Ed Koch gave the Macho Man a key to the city and a Puerto Rican counterpart bestowed a similar honor down in San Juan. Though the new champion has been on an unbridled happiness roll, the time is drawing near for discussions of a title defense.

"After this fight, every fight should be a million dollars—a million dollars for me, that is," Camacho quipped. "I'll fight everybody because there's a lot of talent out there. Wilfredo Gomez (WBA junior lightweight champion) came up from San Juan to see me. If he wants to fight, I'll be glad to retire him, because he's smaller, slower, and older.

"If Mancini doesn't retire, they can bring him on and I'll retire him. He's the all-American boy who they made a movie about only because his father was a fighter. I have no respect for Mancini, but it's a big money fight. That goes for Livingstone Bramble (WBA lightweight champion), Jimmy Paul (IBF ruler), Tyrone Crawley, Rosario, and all the rest. I had a manager



After dispatching Ramirez, Camacho saw mega-bucks fights on the horizon. "After this fight, every fight should be a million dollars—a million dollars for me, that is," Camacho said.

(Giles), who said I was drowning in drugs. Well, look at me now ... I've already won two titles, and I hope to get a third. If conditions are right, maybe a fourth."

One West Coast observer described Hector Camacho as a Latin version of Dennis The Menace, with a little latent Willie Sutton thrown in. Analyzing the champion, who faces an obvious struggle to maturity, is difficult. Yet like it or not, this newest rose from Spanish Harlem is the fastest gun in the east, west, north, or south. Hector Camacho, a machine-gunning talker/puncher, has the kind of hands that now enable him to wear leather suits and furs, and drive a prestigious Lamborghini instead of hot wiring some poor stiff's sedan on Eighth Avenue.

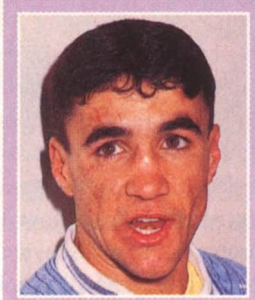
With his magnificent all-around generalship, maybe it's not so important whether he's shooting real bullets or semi-blanks. But some of the purists still wonder how Camacho would emerge from a true firefight at mid-ring.

They may never know.

Part of the champion's expanding celebrity is his Hollywood handsomeness (I'm surprised somebody hasn't dubbed him boxing's Valentino), and it's a physical blessing Hector Camacho will protect quicker than his money. Having all the tools at his command, why not? ■

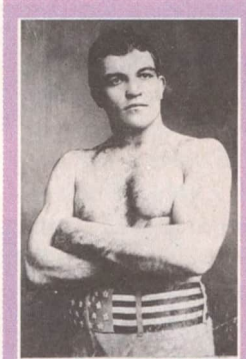
THE RING, October 1985

The Cover: The flamboyant Hector Camacho came a long way from the teenager who used to hot wire cars for fun in Spanish Harlem. "Macho Man" thrust his neon smile and sequined robe into the spotlight with a 12-round unanimous decision over Jose Luis Ramirez for the WBC lightweight belt—then proceeded to disparage everyone else in the division.



Boxing On The Rise Down Under: Australian fight fans hadn't had much to cheer about before the mid-1980s, but the rise of IBF bantamweight titlist Jeff Fenech (pictured) and IBF junior lightweight beltholder Lester Ellis changed all of that. The Sweet Science experienced a revival of sorts in the land of kangaroos and koala bears.

A Rose Not So Sweet: Escaped convict John E. Garcia posed as a promising lightweight named Roberto Medina for three years, before finally getting nabbed by authorities after a spirited loss to Meldrick Taylor on national TV. With a record 61 arrests in the Denver area alone, Garcia's true identity was given away by a rose tattoo on his chest.



Mugging Governing Bodies: THE RING encouraged fighters to decide for themselves who they want to fight instead of letting the alphabet groups decide for them, as the magazine took a look at the chaos caused by the WBA, WBC, and IBF. THE RING even suggested that fighters deciding who succeeds them as champ, as Jim Jeffries (pictured) did in 1905, would be better than letting the alphabet boys decide what to do with vacant titles.

Fighter Of The Month: It's rare that a challenger travels abroad to fight a titleholder in his own backyard and comes out a winner. But Dwight Muhammad Qawi pulled off the trick when he traveled to South Africa and beat Piet Crous for the WBA cruiserweight belt.

THE FIGHT DOCTOR

THE KNOCKOUT: PART TWO

By Margaret Goodman, MD

Determining if a boxer has an acute or chronic head injury is no easy task. You can have the most experienced ring physician or the most expensive newfangled testing, and it remains a question without a definitive answer. If I had to come up with a key word, it would be "comparison."

In detecting acute injuries (concussion), it is crucial to know how a fighter looks in round one *in comparison* to how he behaves as the bout progresses. Chronic injury (Punch Drunk Syndrome) is best discovered by observing a fighter's behavior at the start of his career *in comparison* with how he looks and acts at the end.

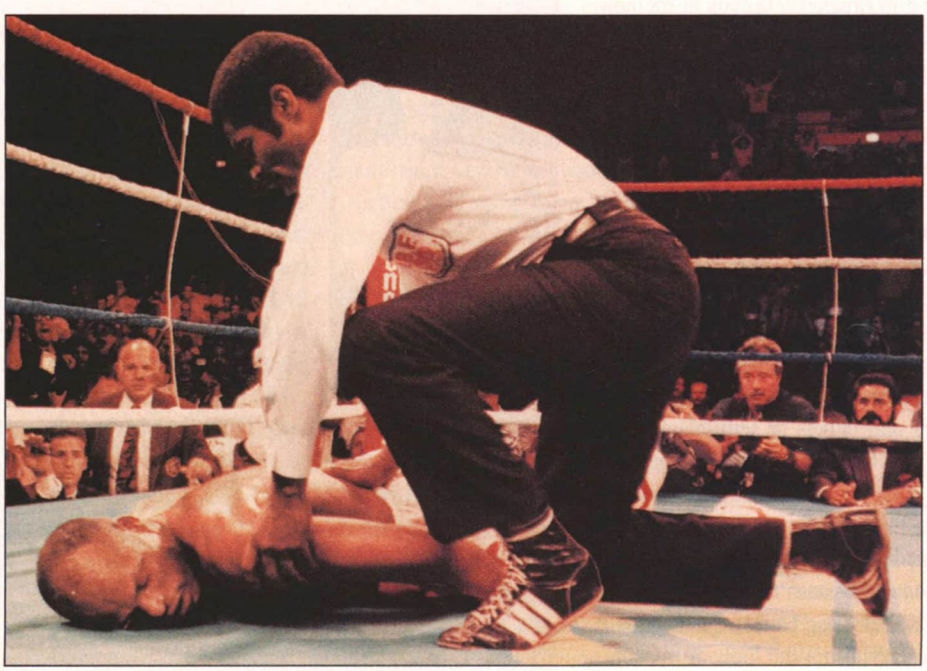
My determination as to whether or not a fighter may have a concussion begins at the weigh-in. It is the doctor's opportunity to see how the boxer walks, talks, and responds to questions. After all, how can a ring doctor make an accurate determination if the boxer has suffered a head injury if he or she has no baseline to use as a point of reference? The weigh-in gives me an opportunity to assess the fighter's speech pattern, alertness, and balance.

It is crucial for every boxer to have someone in his corner who knows him well and isn't afraid to end the punishment, should the need arise. Depending on the number of rounds, the doctor must focus on how the fighter is responding to being tagged. As the rounds accumulate, is the percentage of avoided punches dropping? Is the boxer having trouble finding his corner? Is he unable to answer questions? Is he off-balance? Does he no longer focus on his trainer speaking to him between rounds?

The potential danger of a knockout can be understood by looking at one way concussions are graded:

- Grade I: Confusion, no amnesia, *no* loss of consciousness
- Grade II: Confusion, amnesia for events surrounding the fight or after the fight, *no* loss of consciousness
- Grade III: Loss of consciousness

The higher the concussion grade, the greater the need to transport the fighter to the closest appropriate hospital for evaluation. Once he is sent home, he should be observed for at least another 48 to 72 hours. Furthermore, the severity of the concussion can



Maurice Blocker loses consciousness, resulting in a Grade III concussion

determine when the boxer should return to the ring.

Post-concussive syndrome is a group of symptoms that can begin in the hours or days following a tough fight. It is during this time that biochemical and blood flow changes occur within the brain cells (neurons).

It's important to understand that you don't have to be a doctor to recognize the symptoms. A fighter can demonstrate memory loss, headaches, dizziness, fatigue, blurred vision, poor concentration, irritability, or personality changes. These things are frequently written off as the result of training too hard or losing. Moreover, a normal brain scan doesn't rule out a concussion. But continuing to box with one can be a set up for Second Impact Syndrome (SIS).

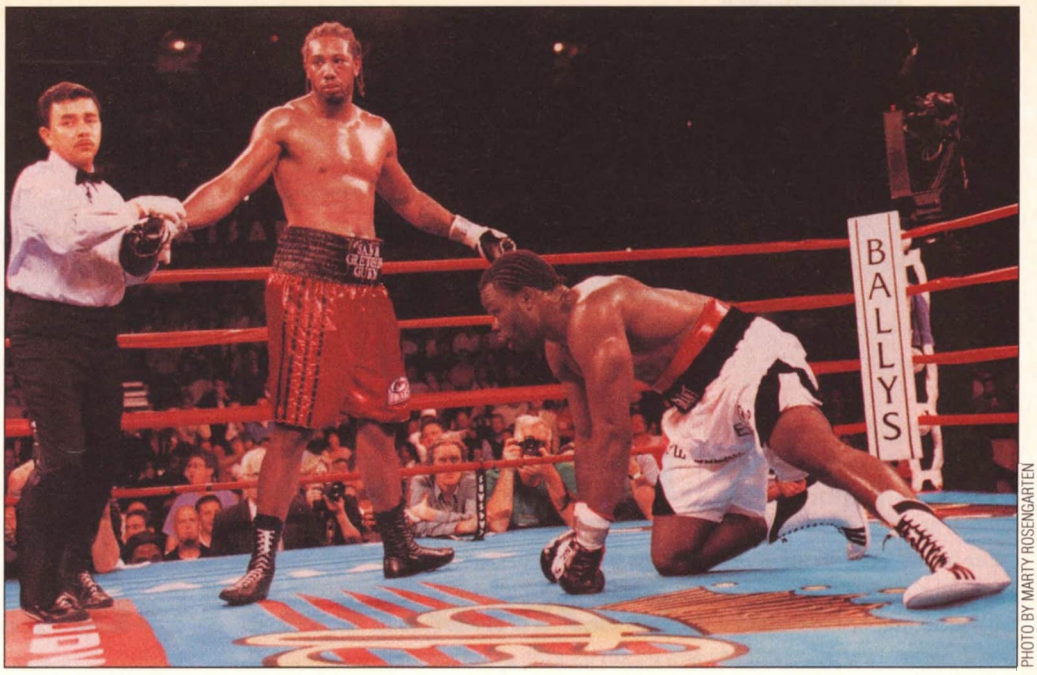


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Michael Grant, who was down four times versus Dominick Guinn, could be vulnerable to Second Impact Syndrome

SIS carries a high risk of serious brain injury and refers to a fighter having an initial small head injury. The boxer continues to take punishment, resulting in a second injury that is life threatening.

SIS could happen within the same bout, but is more commonly thought of in terms of a fighter injured in training, and then collapsing in the ring from little punishment.

Blood clots in the brain (subdural hematomas) can be virtually impossible to distinguish from a simple concussion without a brain scan. Initially, the symptoms can be identical, but the differences lethal. This is further reason why the boxer's corner, friends, or family must provide direction to the ring physician during the postfight exam.

The most frustrating aspect of chronic brain injury lies in the mere fact that by the time a fighter is showing symptoms, it is too late! It is even more difficult to determine how these occur. It is easy to say the fighter who is hit the most will have the greatest risk, but other factors besides genetics/heredity enter into the equation:

- Number of fights (both amateur and professional)
- Number of knockouts or technical knockouts
- Number of losses
- Years of the fighter's career
- Performance history
- Fight frequency
- Sparring regimen (sparring too many rounds)
- Age at retirement
- Use of drugs or alcohol

How do you identify these individuals? Look for the fighter who can take a punch. Obviously, chronic problems are noted at the end of a boxer's career in association with poor performance. Symptoms include slowed reflexes, slurred or garbled speech, memory loss, fatigue, coordination difficulties, and mood swings or personality changes. In other words, symptoms similar to those following acute injury, except these don't go away.

It seems like more and more we hear about professional boxers arrested for impulsive acts, suffering from depression, or demonstrating other signs of mental disorders. Outbursts at weigh-ins or following a kayo are becoming part of the norm. Mental health disorders are facing our boxers all too often and are readily overlooked. Severe injury to isolated areas in the brain can result in unexplained violence and has been definitely linked to depression.

The most important weapon in a fighter's arsenal is a healthy brain. Every boxer beginning amateur or professional competition deserves to know whether they are at an increased risk from head blows. In addition, it is important to establish a baseline image of a boxer's brain. Nevada is starting a program where every fighter who comes to our state will have a one time MRI/MRA. MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) generates a three-dimensional image of the brain. MRA (Magnetic Resonance Angiography) utilizes the same technique to look at the brain's circulation and rule out the presence of abnormal arteries that might bleed.

Great Britain began this protocol in 1997, and it has served them well. Last year, New York began having fighters obtain MRI scans every two years. Lower fees for such testing can be negotiated to make them affordable to every fighter. Although nothing is perfect, it is imperative and perhaps life-saving for the boxer to know he or she is entering the ring with every possible advantage. That includes a healthy brain. ■

Dr. Goodman will be happy to answer questions from readers about the medical aspects of boxing in future columns. Please send your inquiries to: The Fight Doctor, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

THE A, B, C & DEAS OF BOXING

By Tommy Deas

RIGHT CROSS-LEFT HOOK COMBINATION

You've watched the world's best fighters and read about them in this magazine, and now you want to give boxing a try, or at least learn a little more about the mechanics of the sport. Welcome to THE RING'S bi-monthly instructional feature on boxing's basics. Bear in mind, the techniques described here are just one of many approaches to the Sweet Science. The most important thing is to find a good coach and follow his instructions. All instructions on these pages are geared for an orthodox, or right-handed, stance. If you are left-handed, merely turn everything around.

As you continue your boxing education, you will begin to work with better and better fighters, both in the gym and in actual competition. One of the first things you will discover as you start to face more talented and experienced opponents is that they can be very difficult to hit with a single shot. To solve this problem, and to upgrade your offense in general, you will need to throw combinations.

This installment is designed to add another combination to your reserve of boxing knowledge. The right cross-left hook combination can be used to score points, but it gives you the added advantage of putting a couple of power punches together so you can do some real damage. Either of these punches can be effective on their own, and in combination they become a weapon any opponent will want to avoid.

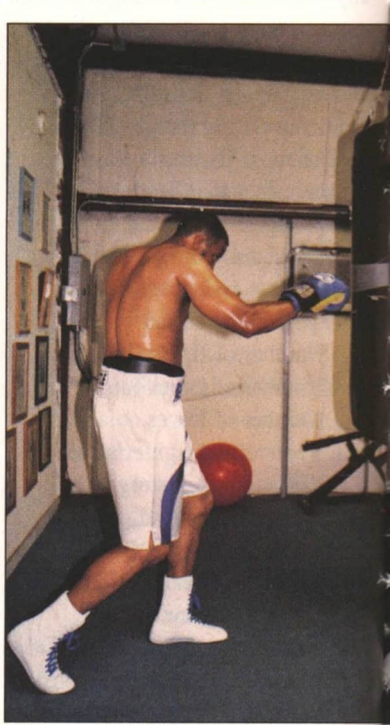
The beauty of this combination is that the first punch sets up the second one and makes it more effective. The force of your right cross will move your opponent's head into the path of the left hook, adding to its effectiveness. Even if your opponent avoids the right, his defensive action will probably move him into the follow-up hook. For this reason, you should always commit yourself to the combination before you throw it. Do not wait to see if the right cross lands before deciding to throw the left hook.

As always, you need to start with a proper stance: hands high, chin down, elbows in tight, knees slightly bent, left foot and left shoulder angled toward your opponent, right foot comfortably positioned below your right hip.

The right cross-left hook begins with a right cross lead. To throw the right cross, rotate your right hip and shoulder forward at full speed. Keep your right hand in place until your right shoulder moves even with your right ear. At this point, begin to extend your right arm forward toward the target, extending it out to full length by the time the punch lands. As the punch nears its target, snap your right thumb downward in a violent, snapping motion.

Thrown properly, your right shoulder and hip will rotate around so that someone standing to your right side can see your back by the time the punch lands. This means you are getting your body into the punch, which translates into more power. Of course, you need to squeeze your fist tight as the punch connects to hit your opponent with a rock-solid fist.

The next step is where the combination really begins. As you bring the right hand back into position after throwing the punch, return it along the same path it traveled to the target. As



Marcus McGee demonstrates on the heavybag the correct way of throwing the right cross-left hook combination. Note how the shoulders and hips rotate in the direction of the punch in order to get the full body weight behind the blows.

the right shoulder rotates back, the left shoulder will begin to rotate forward. This motion starts your left hook on its way to follow up the right cross.

As the left shoulder rotates forward, begin to unhinge your left arm at the elbow until it creates an angle a little greater than 90 degrees, so that your arm looks like the letter "L," with your left fist now extended away from your body in an arc. Allow your left shoulder and hip to move forward toward the target slightly as you shift your weight to your left foot. You should be able to feel your weight in your left knee as the punch travels forward, which adds more force to the punch.

Follow through with your left hip and shoulder until the punch reaches its target. If you simply throw your arm out in a hooking motion, you will end up with an arm punch that does not carry nearly the same force. Once the punch has landed (or missed), retract your left arm back into place along the same path it traveled until you are back in your boxing stance.

You will want to pay attention to a few key points to avoid making some of the mistakes many beginners make when they first start to work this combination.

The most common mistake most beginners make when throwing the right cross-left hook combo is dropping one hand while throwing the other. This leaves you very vulnerable to a counterpunch, especially since your own momentum will be taking you into your opponent's power.

When throwing the right cross, make sure your left hand stays eyebrow-high to keep you covered. As you bring back the right cross and begin to throw the hook, make sure you don't end up bringing your right hand back too low, which leaves you vulnerable to your opponent's hook. Bring the right hand back even with your right cheekbone. Of course, you also need to bring the left hook back high after you throw it. The first rule of boxing, you should always remember, is to protect yourself at all times.

Even the best combination does you little good if you leave yourself wide open when you throw it. Also make sure you keep your elbows in tight as you throw the combination. Many beginners have a tendency to flail their elbows out wide, away from their bodies, especially when throwing more than one punch at a time. This not only makes your ribs an inviting target for bodypunches, it also takes away from your power.

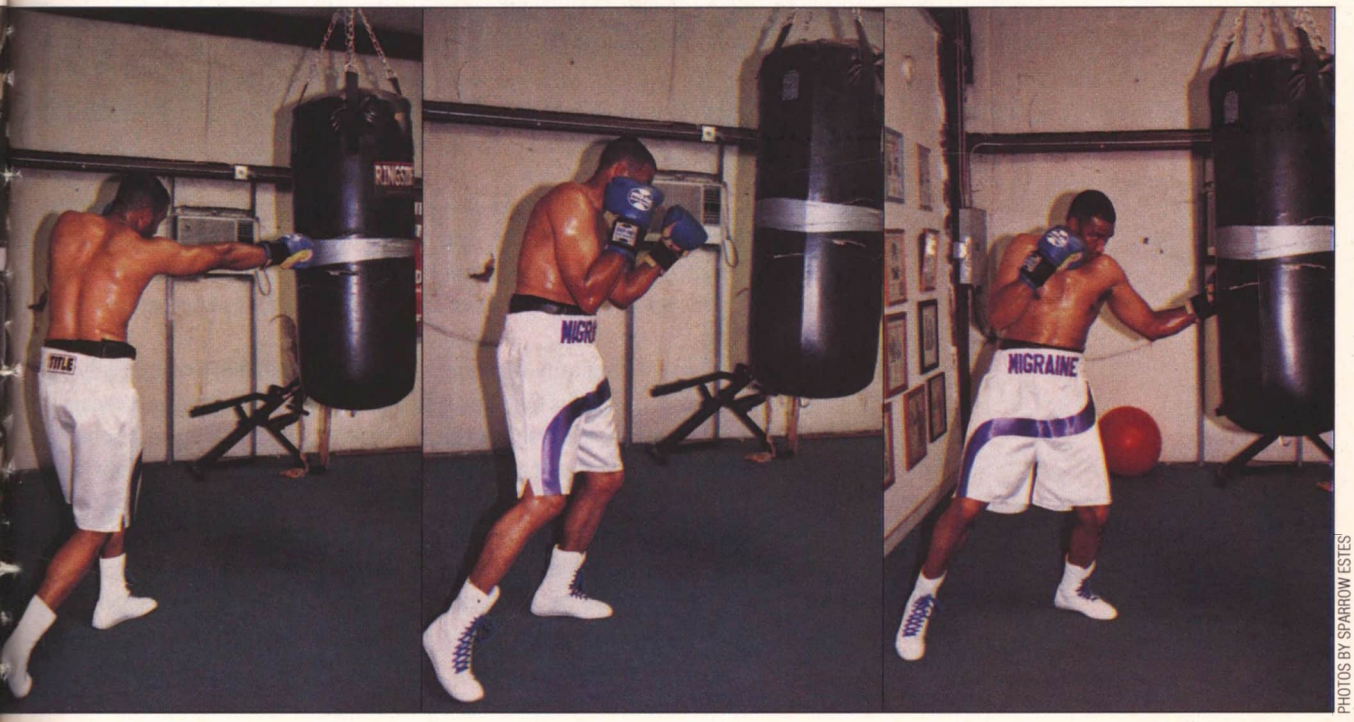
Many boxers, even experienced ones, have a bad habit of lifting their chins when they throw a left hook, as if they are trying to peek over their own hook to see the opponent while they are punching. Keep your chin tucked tight against your left shoulder so it never presents itself as an easy target.

As with any new tool, you need to practice this combination until you are comfortable with it before trying it out against a live opponent. Start by shadowboxing in front of a mirror. It is a good idea to begin with just the shoulder and hip rotations at first, without going through the punching motions with your hands, to make sure you are using your whole body when you punch. Work slowly at first, adding the punching motions with the arm once you have the hip and shoulder rotations down. Pick up the pace as you go until you are able to throw both punches at full speed.

Once you have spent some time shadowboxing and are satisfied with how you are throwing this combination, take it to the heavybag and begin working slowly so you get a feel for how the right cross-left hook works with a target. Again, increase your work rate until you are able to snap both punches together at full power. You should notice that your left hook is landing with a little more force than usual from the way the right cross jolts the bag into it, the same effect you are hoping to have on your opponent.

After you have practiced this combination and feel ready, it's time to try it out in sparring and then take it to the ring, where your next opponent will discover you have another weapon at your disposal. ■

Tommy Deas is a sportswriter for the Tuscaloosa (Alabama) News and a trainer of professional and amateur boxers.



PHOTOS BY SPARROW ESTES

COME OUT WRITING

Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or e-mail letters to comeoutwriting@yahoo.com. E-mailed letters will include the writer's e-mail address unless a city and state of origin is provided.

LENNOX NOT SO GREAT

Lennox Lewis proved again that he does not belong among the greatest heavyweights of all-time. Once again, he has insulted fans who pay hard-earned money to see a heavyweight title fight by coming in overweight and in horrible shape. We saw this type of disregard before in Lewis' pitiful efforts against Oliver McCall and Hasim Rahman, and although Klitschko's cut *was* caused by a legal punch, I thought Lewis got lucky, as he was obviously headed for an upset loss.

Vitali Klitschko mashes Lennox Lewis' face with a right hand during the early going of their heavyweight championship fight in Los Angeles. Reader Joey Intravia feels that Lewis disrespected the title by underestimating Klitschko and coming into the bout out of shape.

Lewis was also in complete denial in his postfight interview with Larry Merchant. He never came close to admitting to his poor showing or giving any credit to an opponent he called unskilled and overrated before the fight. It is a shame to once again see a fighter disrespect the most coveted title in the sport. Lewis is always talking about his legacy and his place among the greats. And that's all it is—talk!

JOEY INTRAVIA
Bethpage, NY

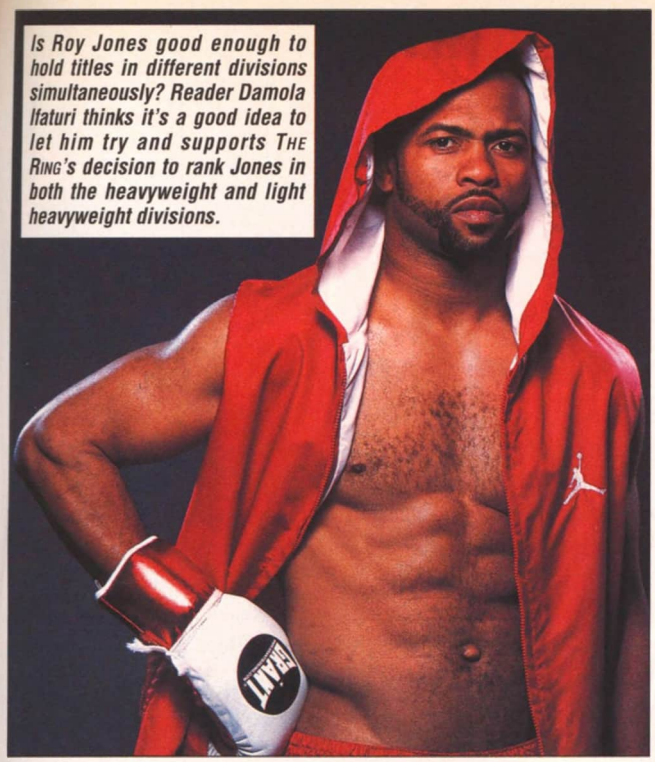
PROBE DEEPER

Instead of becoming just another writer to tell me that Roberto Duran surrendered in humiliation against Ray Leonard in 1980, I would have greatly appreciated Jeff Ryan using the space in his "Ryan Out Loud" column in the August '03 issue to probe a little deeper and expose the real story. The Leonard-Duran rematch was won by Angelo Dundee and Leonard's other handlers at the negotiating table.

After Sugar Ray was mauled by a physically superior Duran in Montreal, the Leonard camp bargained for an immediate rematch. Five months time was sufficient for Dundee to prepare Leonard an altered plan of attack. But following the greatest triumph in Duran's career, months of celebration would ensue for the Panamanian hero. That was a given, and Dundee knew it. Duran was obviously unfit physically and mentally to defeat Leonard that night. Duran uncharacteristically carried noticeable body fat into the ring for the first time in his career.

The talented Leonard may still possibly have defeated a fine-tuned Duran in New Orleans, but the close decision would have warranted an epic third encounter shortly thereafter. The rubber match eight years later meant very little.

STEVE ALWIN
Charlotte, NC



Is Roy Jones good enough to hold titles in different divisions simultaneously? Reader Damola Ifaturi thinks it's a good idea to let him try and supports THE RING*'s decision to rank Jones in both the heavyweight and light heavyweight divisions.*

CAN ROY BE LIKE HENRY?

As a longtime subscriber to THE RING, I welcomed your reverting back to a linear system of champions, ignoring the alphabet bandits' dubious selective rankings. Also, I'd like to give my kudos to Nigel Collins for his "Ringside" column in the September 2003 issue, where he writes that there is " … no reason a fighter should not hold championships in more than one division, providing he can make the weight and defend both titles on a reasonably regular basis." Nigel's argument is well-reasoned, citing the important historical antecedent of Henry Armstrong (from way back in the 1930s), who simultaneously held three world titles.

Indeed, Roy Jones is eminently qualified to remain recognized as world champion in the light heavyweight division (while also ranked as a top contender in the heavyweights) until such time that he has been beaten in the light heavies or forsaken the division. Based on his skills, and despite the oft-stated criticism that he hasn't faced any serious challenges from his opponents, I would go as far as saying Jones is pound-for-pound the best fighter of all-time, not just of the present.

DAMOLA IFATURI
Plainsboro, NJ

SHOW MORE

After having watched all the episodes of HBO's *Legendary Nights*, I couldn't help but think that we'd all have been better off and more appreciative if these fights had been shown in their entirety. We all knew the major parts of history behind these fights, i.e. that Ray Leonard had to turn puncher against Tommy Hearns in their first fight, that Marvin Hagler-Hearns was a great fight, and that George Foreman's knockout of Michael Moorer was a stunning upset. What we all don't know is how the fights went, bell to bell. I had seen most of the fights that were profiled, with the exception of Pryor-Arguello, but a lot of my friends had not. I feel it would have done some good to replay every round of these fights, if for no other reason than to give today's youngsters a chance to see just how great and exciting these fights/fighters were.

JOSH CRAIG
Spokane, WA

GRANT NEEDS INNER STRENGTH

The seventh-round demolition of Michael Grant by previously unheralded Dominick Guinn speaks worlds for the tenuous nature of his career. The sad fact is that despite his emotional conditioning by Teddy Atlas, Grant seems to collapse psychologically, if not physically, whenever he is confronted by an opponent with a pulse. The honest truth is that not even one of the most respected trainers in boxing can give Grant the self-belief he does not have. He must find and defeat those doubts within himself. Unless this gentle giant can discover that psychological self-confidence to overcome this worst loss of his career, he should retire.

JOE HAMMELL
Waynesboro, PA

DON'T FORGET MARTINEZ

I was so terribly disappointed that nothing was written in THE RING regarding the death of Vince Martinez, one of boxing's most colorful and talented boxers. Martinez, who passed away a few weeks before Kid Gavilan, boxed on national television many times against the best welterweights in the world. He also fought for the welterweight championship.

GEORGE TORTORELLI
Miami, FL

[Editor's note: Sorry to have missed noting Martinez' death. He was, as you pointed out, one of the best welters of the 1950s. Martinez, who was born in Mt. Kisco, New York, turned pro in '49 and had his last bout in '61. His 69-8 (36) pro record includes wins over such outstanding fighters as Chico Vejar, Chuck Davey, Art Aragon, Kid Gavilan, and Gil Turner. In his only championship try, Martinez was stopped by Virgil Akins in a '58 bout for the vacant 147-pound title.] ■

Vince Martinez (right) bounces a right hand off Miguel Aguero's chin en route to a 10-round decision in what turned out to be Martinez' final fight, in 1961. Reader George Tortorelli writes to scold us for previously failing to report welterweight contender Martinez' death.

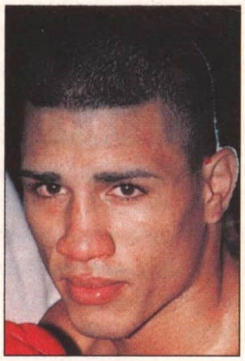
LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

COTTO ON THE GO

If you saw the ESPN Pay-Per-View event from Puerto Rico on June 28, then you know that 140-pound mega-prospect **Miguel Cotto** has nothing left to prove against the **Rocky Martinez** types and is ready to step up to legitimate world-title contenders. You also know that he's becoming an all-out sensation in his island home, ready to break through and become a superstar on the world stage.

With a plum spot on the undercard of the September 13 **Oscar De La Hoya-Shane Mosley** pay-per-view, Cotto will get an invaluable opportunity to elevate his star status. And at the same time, if the opponent promoter **Bob Arum** has in mind does indeed sign on the dotted line, Cotto will be taking the step up that boxing fans are awaiting. According to Arum, it looks like dangerous **Victoriano Sosa**, the cousin of **Sammy Sosa**, who uncorked quite a few good shots en route to losing competitively over the distance to world lightweight champion **Floyd Mayweather** back in April, will be standing across the ring from Cotto at the MGM Grand.



Cotto: Looking to one-up Floyd by slammin' Sosa

"Our feeling is that Cotto is going to be huge, both as a fighter and an attraction," said Arum. "He's one of the finest I've ever seen, and he's met every test so far, so we're going to keep stepping up the competition. Sosa is a tough test. But we think Cotto's ready for him, and we think he'll be ready for a title fight by mid- to late-2004."

That title fight will not come at 135 pounds, as had previously been expected. Cotto found in training that when he got below 138, he began to feel weak, so the former Olympian will remain at junior welterweight—where a certain someone whom Arum also promotes and with whom Cotto will soon have a common opponent in Sosa is expected to be campaigning shortly.

"The biggest fight out there for Cotto is Mayweather," said Arum. "There's a lot of good fighters at 140—**'Chop Chop' Corley**, **Zab Judah**, **Kostya Tszyu**, **Arturo Gatti**—but Mayweather, that's going to be the huge fight down the line."

HBO and Arum's Top Rank may begin the build-up to it in November, with a card featuring Cotto and Mayweather in separate bouts, the latter either against **Julio Diaz** in defense of his 135-pound title or making his 140-pound debut. But another possibility for Cotto for November is a small pay-per-view at the Theater at Madison Square Garden similar to the show in Bayamon in June, featuring Cotto and Top Rank's other Puerto Rican stars playing to a fanatical New York crowd.

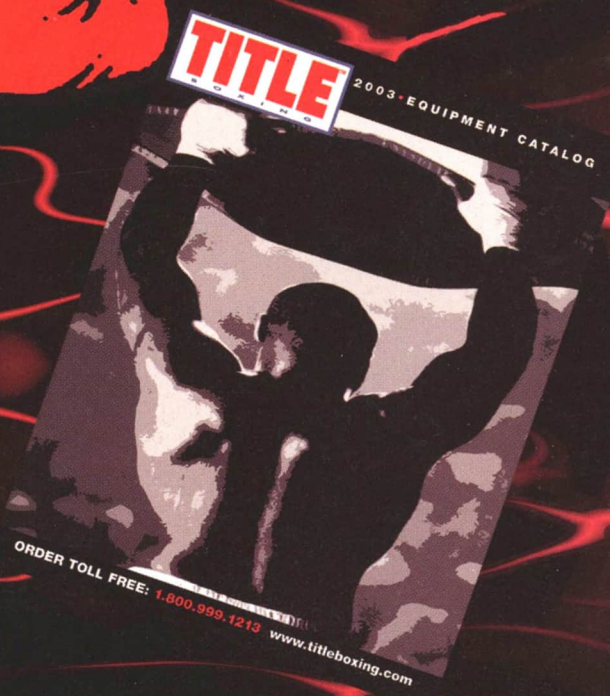
"This kid performs so brilliantly at the gate, he does such huge numbers," said a beaming Arum. "With the help of HBO, he's going to be a monster."

LISTEN UP

The biggest fight in women's boxing history is set for August 23 at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi, Mississippi, when **Christy Martin**, the female fight game's biggest star of the '90s, takes on her apparent successor, **Laila Ali**. With Martin giving up about 15-20 pounds, not to mention her 10-year age disadvantage, the stage seems set for the torch to be officially passed. The event will be available on pay-per-view ... On October 4, the same date of the **Evander Holyfield-James Toney** pay-per-view fight previewed in this issue, Top Rank is looking to present a dueling PPV from the Staples Center in Los Angeles. Headlining will be **Erik Morales** in his junior lightweight debut, possibly against **Guty Espadas** (who hasn't looked great since dropping a disputed decision to Morales in February '01) ... The HBO heavyweight tripleheader that was planned for mid-August has been pushed back to September 27, and the main event is more intriguing than anything that was scheduled for the August date. The fight card with emanate from Buffalo, New York, where undefeated hometown hero **Joe Mesi** will headline—and perhaps come in as an underdog—against heavy-handed fellow prospect **DaVarryl Williamson**. As of press time, the other bouts were looking likely to be former cruiserweight titlist **Juan Carlos Gomez** vs. European heavyweight champ **Sinan Samil Sam**, and undefeated **Dominick Guinn** vs. once-beaten **Duncan Dokiwari**. ■

Ali: PPV showdown with Martin

TITLE
BOXING



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